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EUROPEAN JUNGLE

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EUROPEAN JUNGLE

BY

F. YEATS-BROWN

Author of *Bengal Lancer*, etc.

1939

LONDON

EYRE & SPOTTISWOODE

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To
MY WIFE

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EUROPEAN JUNGLE

CHAPTER I

FAIR HORIZONS OR DEVIL'S PARADISE?

ONCE upon a time, finding myself in the editorial chair of the *Spectator*, I offered a small prize for the best proverb or aphorism to guide a man through life. It was a popular competition. Out of nearly a thousand entries I chose: "*Love, trust, dare, and go on doing it.*"

Two years afterwards, on a passage to Oslo in a nasty little boat that smelt of fish-oil, I met a man who pulled out of his pocket-book a cutting which he said was his constant solace and support. I felt seasick, and was suffering also from a heartache at the time, but the sight of the motto cheered me, rather faintly.

To-day I think of it again in regard to Herr Hitler, and realize that every proverb has its opposite. How many times we have been bitten is a matter for discussion, but now without question we must be twice shy of his promises. His fault is writ large across a startled Europe. None of his neighbours trust him. The law of the jungle prevails. With the breaking of his pledge at Munich our recent hopes of disarmament and reconciliation lie shattered beyond the possibility of quick repair.

It is sad to recall how recent these hopes have been. Only a few days before the swoop on Prague we were told that the skies were clearing. A trade delegation was about to sign an important agreement in Berlin. Sir Samuel Hoare was speaking of a Golden Age. The dove of peace seemed returning with the glories of our English spring. Then Hitler marched.

The pity of it! We are racially close to the Germans

(in spite of our blend of Roman temper and tradition) and we can influence them more than any other people can, and they us, when they are reasonable. Unfortunately they are dreamers. Dangerous dreamers, because of their industry.

In the past Germany was badly treated by us and by the French. In my view, from 1919 up to September, 1938, through twenty years of crises, each more hectic than the last, Germany had reason on her side. She was justified in slithering out of Reparations, whose total was never fixed; she was wise to elect Adolf Hitler, who gave her back her self-respect; she was entitled to re-occupy the Rhineland, which was German soil; and to take Austria, which had repeatedly voted for reunion; and to rescue the Sudeten Germans. Her methods were rash and her words bitter; but I was prepared to justify the indignation of a great people against the Treaty of Versailles. That is the past. Germany had many cards in her hands, but she has overplayed them, as so often before in her history, and lost the ace of hearts, which is the confidence of Europe.

And so what? The answer is not easy. It is, indeed, a long and difficult answer, and those who over-simplify it are doing their country a disservice. We cannot wage a world war to punish Herr Hitler for breaking his promise. There are also pledges which the British Government has not kept. Obviously, however, a crucial moment is coming. Where and when it is to be is the theme of this book. The plot thickens; indeed, it is so complicated that I have taken about a hundred thousand words to describe it. Some of them are stiff and statistical words, but one must see how things began if one would shape their future, and this, I am afraid, is just what we have not done, and are not doing. We have been basing our foreign policy on delusions.

We are a great nation, and a proud nation. It is humiliating to be always supporting lost causes. In former times, when some serious issue arose, we had a habit of thinking quickly, and thinking right, even when inadequate information was at our disposal. Our instinct was sound. But to-day this delicate nose of ours has deteriorated: we hunt too many bagged foxes in our propagandist Press. We thought wrong about the Abyssinian and the Spanish wars. About Austria we were told that Dr. von Schuschnigg had practically the whole country behind him; and about Czecho-Slovakia that democratic Dr. Benes was beloved by everyone except the tiresome, swashbuckling Sudetens; and about Spain that Dr. Negrin was a sort of Spanish Baldwin, bent on curbing the passions of rival factions. These gentlemen were heralds of sweetness and light; the reason they failed, and were eventually thrown out by their own people, was that we did not stand up to the wicked dictatorships. Mr. Chamberlain should have taken a stronger line.

It is not true. Mr. Chamberlain took the right line, and is pursuing it with clear vision. Appeasement was a sane and Christian policy: it is no discredit to him that it has for the moment failed.

For too long we have been trying to fight the dictators with printers' ink. In face of all the evidence to the contrary, three-quarters of our newspapers—unspecified owing to our difficult law of libel—have been sending out a flood of muddy misinformation and fraudulent flippancy with regard to Germany, Italy, and Nationalist Spain, reaching some 10,000,000 or 12,000,000 readers daily. I write this weighing my words, and with first-hand experience of how rumours grow into "news-stories" in the bars of foreign capitals, and how lunchtime gossip becomes "the opinion of authoritative sources" by the time it reaches the British

breakfast-table. There was the recent rumour that Germany had asked Roumania to dismantle all her industries, announced in the Sunday papers, and denied in Bucharest and Paris next day. There was the statement that Germany had mobilized against Czecho-Slovakia on May 21st, 1938: it was given immense publicity, and its refutation very little. So with the landing of 40,000 Germans in Morocco, and the "massacre" at Badajoz, and the "annihilation" of Guernica, and the last fairytale from Spain, told by the Leader of the Liberal Opposition in the House of Commons, and widely published, that General Franco devised infernal machines to look like chocolate boxes, in order to maim the children of his enemies. . . . Nothing is too fantastic to be printed, and unfortunately to be believed.

The reason for this Hitler-hate and Moscow-mindedness (so to speak) is quite simple. It is that "big business" runs our newspapers, and that it hates Fascism and Nazism, but is no longer afraid of Communism.

Newspapers, most people know nowadays, depend for their life on advertising. They are sold for a penny, but cost about twopence to produce. Whatever the views of proprietors or editors, they cannot afford to offend advertisers for any length of time. A newspaper with a circulation of 1,000,000 may receive from advertising revenue more than £5,000 a day; obviously no reserve of capital or private fortune could long withstand a withdrawal of such support. It is true that a merchant is primarily concerned with how many people will see his advertisement, and not with the views of any particular editor (the late Lord Riddell once told me with a chuckle that advertisers prefer a newspaper with no opinions at all, written for readers with a tidy allowance of cash but a slender allowance of brains); nevertheless no man will spend thousands of pounds in a newspaper which annoys him. No adver-

tiser need do so, however, for his views and those of the proprietor are probably not far divergent. Dictatorships such as those of Germany and Italy (but not the Communist dictatorship, which is the apotheosis of "big business") favour the "little man" at the expense of the great department store, and the producer at the expense of the company promoter. The City of London has seen that we cannot be the world's bankers if the nations adopt closed economic systems. Authoritarian régimes rarely ask for loans. They are producer-fixated, instead of being financier-fixated. Our diplomats and financiers predicted that the dictatorships would fail, but they were wrong: they were, in fact, working very well for the small farmer, small shopkeeper, small producer, and would again, if the fear of war could be removed. The dictatorships are as suspicious of us as we are of them. They believe that we want to stifle their trade and ruin them; and they want security as much as we do. But the financier wants the opposite. He wants flux: change: an active market; and the financier rules our Press.

So it is that the average reader, getting good value for his money (because it *is* good value, if you consider only the "features" a newspaper contains—racing tips—cross-words—gossip), will glance at the foreign news and form his opinions along the lines desired by the rich men who own or support the newspapers. There is no mystery, no sinister plot. It is all in the line of business. A somewhat circuitous line, perhaps: you pay your penny and get two-pennyworth of entertainment. Many of us buy our newspaper for its insurance policy rather than for any other policy; and few of us have the time, inclination, or opportunity to discover at first-hand what is really happening in Bratislava, *alias* Pressburg, or Memel, *alias* Klaipėda. . . .

In a Press like ours—and I am in favour of a free Press,

in spite of the bunkum talked about it—the mischief-makers and malice-mongers have an advantage over responsible writers. Lies are often amusing or exciting, whereas the truth is frequently dull, especially if we don't want to hear it. A man who goes to Germany and reports that the Führer is loved by the people is a bore, and may be a dupe, and, anyway, he is certain to be unpopular in present circumstances, whereas one who reports that Hitler is going mad, or has quarrelled with all his generals, is sure of an interested public. We used to be told the same sort of yarns about Mussolini at the beginning of the Abyssinian War. . . . What would Left-Wing newspapers have said, by the way, if there had been dozens of bombs exploded in Germany, as there have been recently in England?

My own opinion is that up to the spring of 1938 we were more at fault in this wretched campaign of invention and distortion than were the dictatorship countries, but that since then they have been repaying us in our own coin. Repaying us with interest. But can we permanently adopt the attitude that because of our freedom we can say what we like about foreigners, but that if they reply we are being unjustly attacked? True, there is a strong censorship in Germany and Italy, but these countries have no intention of allowing themselves to be abused without answering back.

The surface situation has all the absurdity and hysteria of a domestic quarrel, and would subside as quickly (but *aliquid hæret*: something sticks, and there would be, of course, some very serious divergencies to be settled in a calm atmosphere) as soon as we curbed our tongues. We co-operate to stop drug-smuggling; why cannot we do something to limit the currency of political dope which arouses the most dangerous passions of mankind?

"No man can justly censure another," wrote Sir Thomas

Browne, "because no man truly knows another," but we are far from his time. Far even from pre-war standards, when criticism of foreign statesmen rarely descended to vulgar personalities.

Naturally we fear the Nazis and Fascists more than we do the Communists, because they have been more successful. But that is no reason why we should not tell the truth about them. If war were inevitable, as it would be, for instance, if Germany or Italy increased their navies beyond a certain point, nagging at the dictators would do no good. Bulldogs don't bark before they bite.

The barkers seem to be people who cannot forgive dictatorships for disturbing their dreams of a world order based on Geneva, the gold-standard, and international lending. Some of them are peaceable, and do not understand the consequences of the noise they make; others want war to retrieve their lost illusions. All of them, until recently, were preaching disarmament and various brands of pacifism. Now—God forgive them!—that we have an Arab revolt threatening, and a difficult Balkan situation, they go on abusing the authoritarian States, instead of trying to make sure that if we do have to fight we shall do so only for our own vital interests.

* * * * *

If this had not been an age of miracles I would not have undertaken so large a task as I have, nor one so likely to be unpopular as praising certain aspects of modern Germany and Italy. But it was a necessary task; and as Sa'adi says: "If the diver were to think of the jaws of the crocodile he would get no pearls." And again, "What has the goose to fear from a thunderstorm?"

The thunderstorm is close to us. Mr. Neville Chamberlain is here, with his symbolical umbrella, but are we really

facing the realities which are always present to Continental nations? I am afraid not.

* * * * *

I began this book sitting at the window of an hotel above Vevey, in Switzerland, on a summer's evening, thinking of the high resolves and abject frustrations of Europe during the last twenty years.

"Chillon" (I wrote) "stands whitely over Lac Leman, brooding upon the past. All the French coast is mirrored in opalescent waters. Away to the west, unseen in the twilight, rises the would-be centre of the world, the great, godless new Palace of the Nations, with its purple gravel and peacocks. . . ."

Purple gravel and peacocks! There I stuck; there was nothing else to say about the League of Nations. I added a couple of stilted sentences:

"No need now to flog that dead horse! Let us rather praise the desire of the nations that gave it birth, and hope for its renewal in a regenerated world. . . ."

Distracted, I began to write about another horse, a fantastic and fascinating creature, which if it could be exhibited would draw crowds greater than the Giant Panda to the Zoo. But the Red Horse of Troy* is elusive. No Liberal can recognize it, for Liberals are colour-blind to red. Journalists see it sometimes in Fleet Street, but find it advisable not to mention the forelegs of Stalin and the backside of Dimitrov, lest they should offend those of us to whom it is a sacred animal.

* On August 2nd, 1935, the Secretary-General of the Third (Communist) International, Gregori Dimitrov, reminded his hearers of the story of Troy, and recommended them to enter the camp of capitalism disguised as democrats, in order to disrupt the enemy from within. These tactics produced the reigns of the Popular Fronts in Spain and France.

The more I studied the Red Horse the less I liked the looks of the brute. At first sight he seemed absurd: the device of a group of lunatics in Moscow which ought not to deceive a child. But it has deceived, and does deceive more than children. The Horse can carry its invaders into all sorts of surprising places, such as the Deanery of Canterbury, the ducal demesnes of Atholl, and the White House at Washington. Austria and Czecho-Slovakia and Spain are already history: history made against a barrage of histrionic and unavailing protests from a duped and doped democracy of two hundred million English-speaking people, because—as I see it—we were always on the wrong side (until March, 1939), and always trying—in the name of democracy, if you please—to prevent the accomplishment of the will of the people concerned. To-day, however, Germany, by her deliberate disregard of Mr. Chamberlain's efforts to promote goodwill, has done her best to make the most sinister prophecies of Madame Tabouis, Mr. Vernon Bartlett, and Commander Stephen King-Hall come true.

Incidentally, I know these three Cassandras, and cannot help liking the two first named. Madame Tabouis is a representative Frenchwoman, with all the fire and flexibility and intelligence of her race. There is nothing small or mean about her intentions, in spite of the shocking stuff she writes. Vernon Bartlett has a good brain, and a real knowledge of Europe: when I read the *News Chronicle* I am filled with wonder about this world of ours, in which we both honestly think we are telling the truth.

Certainly the whole truth can never be told about any man, or woman, or country, if one hopes for peace. But I shall be objective, as far as in me lies, and the story I have to tell hangs together and makes sense. *On one condition.* If you are not a Christian, it may appear fan-

tastic to suggest that there are forces of evil in the world working against the powers of good. The Devil has become unfashionable. He has gone "underground," like the Communists. But unless you believe in the Devil this book will provide no explanation of what is happening in the world.

We shall always have to wrestle with an Adversary. In this book I have often labelled him the Red Horse, or the Comintern, but his forms will always be protean. He might easily exchange the skin of Stalin for that of Hitler. Perhaps he has already done so. He will always be urging some Cadarene herd over some precipice. It is the way the world is made. It was right for Russia (I am not approving the ways of Providence, or criticizing them, but only trying to explain my view-point) and good for Russia that she should have been saddled with the Bolsheviks, because it was her mission to change the face of the world through Communism and through the reactions which it induced. It was right and good for Spain to be faced with the terrible trials which she has met with so much courage (on both sides), because only through them could she have driven out the evil that was destroying her. A measure of adversity is necessary for healthy growth. Sheltered plants are rarely strong:

"The troubles of our proud and angry dust
Are from Eternity, and shall not fail."

Satan incarnates sometimes in those who cannot support the burden of our civilization and would shatter it to bits, and sometimes in the body of a man of genius, to scourge the earth, and sometimes in amiable and idealistic guises, capturing the minds of saints even, and others unconscious of the parts they play. He has cleverer snares than pride and great possessions to spread in the sight of the birds of democracy: in France and England to-day he

stands often in the shoes of Liberalism, a fine figure of a bourgeois, believing in a free Press, free elections, and self-determination. Except, of course, when the results would be displeasing, as in Palestine.

These British Liberals! A famous Spanish scientist, Dr. Maranon, himself a Liberal, and one of the Fathers of the Republic, has expressed what I feel about them most eloquently. He says: *

"If it were possible to find a single cause for the present upheaval of humanity, I should not hesitate to say that it is to be found in the great mistake of the Liberals of the world. They originally represented the humanist tendency in civilisation . . . but to-day the majority of them sympathise with the most anti-Liberal and anti-humanist of all the political ideologies that have ever existed, the Communist ideology. . . . Spanish Liberals know where they are, but those of the rest of the world are not yet enlightened. I am not writing with the idea of convincing them. In politics the only psychological mechanism of change is not conviction but conversion. One should always suspect the man who changes because he says he has been convinced. One day the Liberals of the world will experience a thunder-clap and lightning-flash and will fall to the ground. When they return to consciousness they will have learned once more the way to the truth."

In addition to Dr. Maranon, Señors Lerroux, Ayala, and Madariaga were names to conjure with amongst the Left-Wing intellectuals of the world. But now these good Spanish Liberals have seen the Devil at close quarters and they are no longer prophets in Bloomsbury. . . .

What we are witnessing is a general readjustment in the ideas of government in Europe. The Russians began it, but their methods (to say the least) were unsuitable to Christendom. Then Italy, then a dozen other countries evolved their own methods, and found them good. Now

* *Liberalism and Communism*, by Dr. G. Maranon. Spanish Press Service, London, 1937.

(besides Italy) Germany, Spain, the Baltic States, Poland, Roumania, Yugoslavia, Albania, Bulgaria, Turkey, Greece, and Portugal—say 258,500,000 people in Europe alone, many of them admittedly of high culture and intelligence—have come to the conclusion that they have discovered political systems superior to the British.

These people may all be barbarians, who will one day see the light and return to democracy. But it would be wiser to convince the world of our superiority by example, rather than by sermons. Unfortunately our Left-Wingers and Pluto-democrats cannot desist from preaching. They cannot bear to believe that anyone is prospering under régimes of which they do not approve, so they have indulged in "wish-thinking" on a scale unprecedented in history.

But the world, as it is unfolding itself before our insular and somewhat self-complacent eyes, is redefining its ideas of liberty. Political liberty is a delusion in great modern States. Someone must do the governing. Perhaps the English discovered this first of all, for our highly paid and irremovable Judiciary and Civil Service was an excellent kind of authoritarian rule, until universal suffrage and the spread of education gave too much power to the Press Lords. But we go on mumbling the old catchwords.

So it seems to me, who have been a wanderer through the new and rising nations of Europe. I have, indeed, travelled much, and can claim to know intimately the countries of which I have written here. I was born in Italy and was taken from Genoa to Boston, U.S.A., at the age of six. I spoke Italian before I spoke American. I spoke French before I went to school, and during the Great War I was for a time an interpreter in that language. Before I went into the Army I had spent a year in Germany at the impressionable age of seventeen. I have visited all the countries of Europe, many of them many

times, except Portugal, unfortunately, but including the Republic of San Marino, with its agreeable jam tarts and strong white wine.

I have said little of the Baltic States, hemmed in between Teuton and Slav and Pole, and nothing of Belgium, where a young King is shepherding very kittle cattle, and nothing of that marvellous land of Holland, with its vivid foregrounds and misty distances of windmills and church spires against violet clouds and silver demi-lunes of dykes. And I have said nothing of the sane and superb countries of Scandinavia, whose people I love with more than a brother's affection, and nothing of Switzerland, who has solved her religious and racial diversities with rare tolerance (though it took her some centuries) so that to-day she is an example to the world. May her example in another matter be also noted: in five out of her twelve Cantons she has banned the Communist Party. The Swiss love liberty as much as we do, and are as hospitable as we are to all sorts of cranks, but they know more than we do of the tactics of the Trojan Horse.

* * * * *

Although I have no first-hand knowledge of Portugal, I venture to cite her recent history in order to point a moral and adorn this tale. . . . After eighteen revolutions in sixteen years of Liberal Democracy, from 1910 to 1926, and forty changes of Government, General Carmona, the present President, took power by means of a military *coup d'état*, and so added Portugal to the long list of successful dictatorships in Europe. Immediately the Portuguese realized that there was a new and steadier hand on the helm. It was only two years later, however, in 1928, when the General discovered an ascetic young Professor of Economics, Dr. Oliviera Salazar, that Portugal began to regenerate herself in earnest.

Salazar was asked to come to Lisbon as financial adviser. Before doing so he spent the night in prayer. In Lisbon he soon discovered that nothing could be done unless he had a free hand. So he returned to his University, only to be summoned thence, a few days later, with the offer of practically unlimited powers, financial at first, afterwards practically dictatorial.

In 1928 the League of Nations was ready to give Portugal a loan, on the usual conditions of foreign control. It was rejected: the country trusted Salazar and was ready to make the necessary sacrifices. Portugal is poor, with only 8,000,000 inhabitants (and 8,000,000 more in her Empire) and taxation had to be screwed up. The alternative, however, would have placed her Empire in pawn to foreign financiers. Corruption in Government circles was sternly repressed. The administration was overhauled. To-day Portugal is independent of any foreign tutelage. Schools have multiplied. Hundreds of miles of new roads have been built. The army and navy have been reorganized. There is a small but efficient air force. Above all, the condition of the poor, which was deplorable under Liberal Democracy, has been improved out of all recognition. Real wages have increased by some 25 per cent. It is the old story, which we shall follow through many versions; and as usual Salazar's success has been pursued by the envy, hatred and malice of Popular Fronts and Communists everywhere, particularly in Spain.

Had the Communist revolution succeeded in Spain, there is no doubt that the Bolsheviks would have fomented revolution in Portugal, in order that the whole Peninsula should be under the Red Flag. Indeed, Señor Largo Caballero announced that one of the first tasks of Republican Spain, after "the suppression of the rebels," would be the formation of a Union of Iberian Socialist Republics.

And what has been heard in England, or in the United States, of this most Christian dictator? A few lectures have been given and a few articles written, but Dr. Salazar's work is on the whole unknown to the English-speaking world. Unknown, because unwelcome to the Left Wing and Great Soft Centre of democracy.

We have ties with Portugal more ancient than with any other country; and closer than with any except France. Our trade routes converge within the Lisbon-Azores-Cape Verde triangle, and we guarantee the scattered Portuguese Empire. If ever we are at war again, the value of a friendly and Christian Portugal, ensuring our communications with the Americas, the Cape, and the Mediterranean, is obvious. I do not, myself, believe that either the Mediterranean or the European Atlantic seaboard is absolutely vital to our existence. The route by Northern Ireland and Newfoundland, which we used in the Great War, practically safeguards us from hostile aeroplanes and submarines. None the less, the converse to a friendly and Christian Portugal, with the Red Flag flying over Lisbon, is not pleasant to contemplate.

To a deeply religious man, such as Dr. Salazar, our attitude towards the Spanish War must have been almost un-understandable. How could we, a Christian nation, believing in freedom, support a Government which had permitted the wholesale slaughter of its political opponents, and which had closed practically all the churches in its territory? *How could we?* The question may have been in Dr. Salazar's mind when he answered Mr. Cordell Hull's high-sounding Foreign Policy Statement of July 16th, 1937, in which the American Foreign Secretary asked the nations of the world whether they believed in "national and international self-restraint and abstinence from the use of force," and *blah, blah* through a plethora of platitudes. Fifty nations replied in the same

tone, that they appreciated at their high value the principles enunciated by the Secretary of State, and agreed that "no effort should be spared to avoid armed conflict." Portugal's reply was original and independent. After referring to the "abstract and generalizing tendencies of jurists," she called attention to danger of "excessive ambition to find a sole method for the solution of international problems, applicable *urbi et orbi* and covering a whole which is manifestly superior to the intelligence of men and their capacity of execution."* Finally, said Portugal, "the nations have acquired the habit of entrusting the solution of grave external problems to vague formulæ. To acknowledge by means of an impartial examination of present world affairs the inanity of the efforts made hitherto appears to this Government the first step, and the indispensable preparation of the ground for any constructive work."

And so say I!

* * * * *

Standing before the helmet and mailed fist of Charlemagne in the treasury of Aachen Cathedral it is curious to reflect what would have happened to us—to all of us in Europe—if that great Emperor had been succeeded by men of equal calibre.

His sign-manual, written round a Cross, in curious resemblance to a swastika, ran from the Baltic to the Black Sea. He was a great man in every sense (he measured 6 feet 3 inches), and he gave Europe a peace and unity that it has not known since the ninth century. In those days the nations were in a fluid state, shaping themselves in the womb of time between the polarities of the Emperor in Aachen and the Pope in Rome. Had a

* *International Conciliation* for November, 1937. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, New York.

Charlemagne succeeded a Charlemagne down the centuries, there would have been a United States of Europe. We would have been just as civilized, or more so, but we should not have been the people we are. William would never have conquered us and introduced the catalyst of Norman blood amongst the tribes that Harold ruled. We might have been more docile, and probably a good deal stupider.

To-day we have Hitler instead of Charlemagne.

We have wished him on ourselves. First, because the rise of the Nazi power was directly due to the injustices to which we subjected Germany after the War. Secondly, and more immediately, because we drove a re nascent and powerful Italy from our councils into the arms of Germany, under the threat of starvation through Sanctions. Drove her unwillingly. Mussolini mobilized to prevent the Anschluss in 1934. He would have done so again in 1938 but for our fatal foreign policy. Latins are not at ease with Teutons, and never will be: the two nations are as naturally antipathetic as we and Germany might be naturally friendly.

Instead of limiting Italy's Abyssinian campaign, our policy of Sanctions had exactly the opposite effect. With fifty-two nations ranged against her, the whole country rallied to Mussolini, and her then lukewarm enthusiasm for the adventure mounted rapidly to boiling-point. The Duce was compelled to conquer or to die. He conquered, and in doing so swallowed the bitter leek of Berlin.

That leek still sticks in his throat. The dictatorships have been so apparently successful in their policy of pounces and swoops that we tend to forget that there are anxious minds behind the front of triple brass.

I have described the countries I know best and have visited most recently, trying to feel as they feel, and trying to remember what they remember. Germans,

Italians, Spaniards, have seen things happen in their villages and in their cities which we can hardly imagine here in sheltered England. We fail sometimes in imagination. So do all nations. But we, of all people, fail least when the testing moment arrives.

My reason for tracing in some detail, as I shall, the ghastly story of the revolutionary movements in Russia, Italy, Germany, Hungary, and Spain is that we may be warned of what may happen before it is too late. We have come to hate Hitler so heartily that we may come to love Stalin too much. What may happen in England is probably not revolution, but the kind of disintegration which occurred in France under the Popular Front.

I dislike Communism because I dislike any sort of internationalism. Frankly, although I was born abroad, I often feel inclined to heave half a brick at the foreigner; but that does not prevent my knowing he exists, and has every right to exist. Foreigners have my best wishes as long as they keep themselves to themselves, but this is just what the Comintern does not do. Its business is propaganda, setting Europe by the ears, revolution. We shall have no peace as long as it exists. But except for the Comintern I have no quarrel with the great Russian people. Each nation has its part to play, its contribution to make to history. Let them glorify their sickle and hammers, fasces, swastikas, yoke and arrows. There is plenty of room in the world for all of us, as I shall try to explain.

CHAPTER II

UNHOLY RUSSIA

God rest you, peaceful gentlemen, but give us leave to pass,
We go to dig a nation's grave as great as England was!
For this Kingdom and this Glory and this Power and this Pride,
Three hundred years it flourished—in three hundred days it died!

Russia to the Pacifists, 1918, by Rudyard Kipling.

IN Leningrad, at the Smolny Institute, which was previously an aristocratic academy for girls, I visited the little bedroom and sitting-room from which Lenin directed the October Revolution of 1917.

It is a shrine of Communism, and its plain, white-washed walls preserve an atmosphere of heroism and simplicity: one senses here something of the good side of the Bolshevik movement: the austerity of the lives of its leaders, their idealism, their courage in tackling a task which would daunt even supermen.

Lenin and his comrades were no supermen (most of them were quite the contrary, if their confessions can be believed), but their place in history is assured, for they have shaken the earth more profoundly than Tamerlane or Genghis Khan. To reflect on what might have been, had other administrators been in power, as capable but less influenced by the desire of world revolution, and more concerned for the welfare of Russia, would be profitless. Their deeds may seem unbelievable to future ages, but it is well to remember that they were acting under grave provocation. Doubtless they were instruments of Providence.

Indisputably old Russia was in need of drastic reform. The Czar was a well-intentioned weakling, with all the

stubbornness of stupidity, and the aristocracy (although not the Czar's immediate circle) was mostly dissolute and incapable. It is true that many aristocrats were reformers, and had been so since the days of the Dekabrists (those idealistic nobles of the early nineteenth century who live in Nekrasov's poem), but the world-resounding indignation of Tolstoy and the heart-searchings of Chckov did not alleviate the sufferings of the poor. Lenin was needed. Needed, because the Russians, who might have saved their country, such as Stolyapin, were murdered or disgraced; and because, later, Kerensky was not the man for the days of destiny following the Czar's abdication.

The middle classes—a small but growing body—were worshippers of Mammon. The Orthodox clergy, although they numbered some saints amongst them, were generally ignorant and corrupt. The richer farmers ground the faces of the peasants. To-day it is easy to say that the Bolsheviks killed too many brittle intellectuals (easy, and amply justifiable), but to do them justice we must admit that they were confronted by great difficulties. Russia was in a state of anarchy, and was surrounded by rival armies, whose methods were hardly less brutal than those of the Communists. Some lopping of the heads of the tallest poppies was inevitable.

The Bolsheviks, whatever their crimes and blindnesses, planned for posterity on a big scale. Their experiments have not yielded the results expected, yet an undeniable grandeur remains, a vision of what might be, and can be. They have given hope, and the horizon of a full life to millions of young people; and have quintupled the industrial output of Russia since 1929.

Illiteracy has decreased (although not so much as the Bolsheviks claim) and the circulation of newspapers is now said to be 20 million a day, or 13 times more than in the days of the Czar. (It would be fair to say, how-

ever, that if writing has increased in quantity it has decreased in quality.) Industrial cities have grown out of virgin forests: Magnetogorsk has 200,000 inhabitants, Karaganda 150,000, Berezniki 80,000, Komsomolsk 50,000. Many towns have doubled or tripled their size. The face of Moscow has been changed, and it has grown from 1,000,000 to 4,000,000 inhabitants to-day. Workers have increased from 14,500,000 in 1930 to more than 26,000,000 in 1937. The hydro-electric power station on the Dnieper, the Volga-Moscow Canal, the Turksib Railway, represent great efforts in nation-building. (They are not the greatest enterprises of their kind in the world, as is often alleged by Communists, nor are they always functioning satisfactorily. The British have built greater power stations in India, the Germans and Italians more and better roads, the French more railways—in the North of France—the Americans greater barrages than the Russians have since 1917. But this is not to say that there has not been immense industrial progress in the U.S.S.R.) The Bolsheviks, we must admit, have developed the country with great speed, however ruthless and clumsy they may have been.

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The Smolny Institute is an enormous building. Through its corridors, which once rang with girlish laughter, messengers were tramping with fly-blown bundles of files. Commissars sat in their shirt-sleeves, with cigarettes and glasses of tea, planning, planning. (To-day bureaucracy has spread to other immense and impressive sky-scrapers.) A mountain of memoranda rose at their elbows, as it does at the elbows of all the bureaucrats on earth. This hive of offices, these piles of files, returned to my memory time and again while I travelled through Russia. They were symptomatic—like Lenin's tomb, which looks grand

in the distance, but is poor in detail—symbolical of a huge human failure behind an imposing façade of planning.

From the Red Square, especially at night, when the mausoleum of the greatest materialist of modern times stands foursquare, gleaming, monolithic, against the rose-pink walls of the Kremlin, and high and far above it the Red Flag flutters flood-lighted, one gains an impression of strength and unity of purpose. But inside, the lighting effects are those of a cabaret, and the sallow mummy that meets the visitor at the end of the pilgrimage is a peep-show and an anti-climax, almost an absurdity.

Vladimir Iliich Ulianov, the slant-eyed bourgeois from the Volga whom the world came to know as Lenin, was a great figure, though an evil force. He founded his power on a Terror hitherto unparalleled, but he was good and kind in private life. Here, under glass, is Lenin, with his yellow face, magnificently moulded forehead, thin red beard, sardonic smile, and a wart by the right eye. Those little waxy hands, folded over the flag of the Paris Commune, wrote a warning against Stalin as life ebbed from them. Now Stalin is the judge of what Lenin intended, and signs the death-warrants of those who disagree. . . .

* * * * *

After luncheon* on the day on which I visited the Smolny Institute I was able to compare the late Czar's bedroom with Lenin's, for I was taken, as all tourists are, to Tsarkoye Selo, the vast white châteaux where the

* On this occasion a well-nourished Englishman of my party—the representative of a Co-operative Society—ordered a bottle of beer. The price was five roubles, which was 17s. 6d. at the official rate of exchange. His enthusiasm for the Socialist Experiment waned perceptibly.

Romanoffs lived, now renamed Detskoye Selo, "the Children's Village."

In the Little Summer Palace all stands as it did when Nicholas II and his family lived there through the anxious last years of his reign, from the shooting in front of the Winter Palace, in January, 1905, until three weeks before his abdication.

The fall of the House of Romanoff is a story that moves to its close with the inevitability of Greek tragedy. In Detskoye Selo, before the Czar's writing-desk, covered with family portraits and all the knick-knacks of Victorianism, one can understand his intense conservatism, his belief in his mission, and something of the atmosphere which made it possible for a lascivious Siberian peasant to arrive as a prophet to the Court, to heal the sick Czarevitch.* . . . The Czarevitch, who had a little table and a little chair beside his father, that he might learn his rôle as Autocrat of All the Russias. . . .

When the Czar played his last card—the Constitution—he wrote to his mother (in November, 1905):

"You remember those January days, when we were together, and so unhappy? Well, they were *nothing* to what has happened now. . . . During these horrible days I have had continual conferences with Witte. There are only two courses: to find an energetic soldier to crush the rebellion by force. This would give us time to breathe, but after a few months we would probably have to have recourse to force again, which would entail rivers of blood, and leave us where we started. The other course is to give the people their civil rights, liberty of speech and press, and the obligation of submitting all laws to the Duma, which naturally means the granting of a Constitution. We discussed this for two days, and at last, asking for Divine aid, I signed.

* Sir Paul Dukes, in his vivid *Diary of S.T. 25* (Cassell, 1938), says that ladies of the nobility would lick Rasputin's fingers after dinner, to clean them, since he did not know how to use a knife and fork.

"You can't imagine what I had to go through before I came to this terrible decision, which I have made, however, with a clear conscience. There was nothing for it except to make the Sign of the Cross, and to agree to what the people were demanding. My one consolation is that this is the will of God, and that my action will take my dear Russia out of the intolerable chaos in which it has been for nearly a year."

The Czar gave his people too little, or too much. The Universities and the young people were of various shades of red, from Menshevik pink to the scarlet of Bakunin. The army and the landlords, on the other hand, hoped that the Duma would put things right: Russia is chiefly agricultural, and if the peasants had been fairly dealt with, the Revolution would not have occurred when it did, if at all. But a fair deal for the peasants would have required a strong Czar, or wise counsellors. The aristocrats at Court were disgusted with Rasputin, and felt that it was hopeless to expect the hen-pecked Emperor to free himself from the influences which were bringing the country to ruin.

Yet in Russia individual talent and material circumstances were ready for the hand of a reformer, and might have made her prosperous. It is an error to suppose that she was industrially backward in 1914: her industries were indeed new, and undeveloped, but their equipment was more modern than that of France, and better organized.* She had a big iron and steel industry. In the eighteenth century she produced more metal than France, and the steels of the Urals were then among the best in the world. In 1870 the annual production of iron ore was 312,000 tons; in 1880, 384,000 tons; in 1890, 778,000 tons; in 1900, 2,630,000 tons; an increase for each decade of 23, 103, and 238 per cent. respectively. In the next decade the production remained stationary, but between

* Statistics which follow are epitomized from *L'U.R.S.S. telle qu'elle est*, by Yvon. Gallimard, Paris, 1938.

1910 and 1913 the increase was 51 per cent. in three years. Nor were the rulers of Russia sluggish in promoting education. Between 1909 and 1914 the Budget for Public Instruction more than doubled itself, from £17,000,000 to £39,000,000. There were 8,000,000 children at school in 1912, and each year, under the Czar, a hundred secondary schools were opened, accommodating 38,000 pupils. The effort was insufficient to the need, admittedly, but it was an earnest of what might have been done if the Czar had been either a good democrat or a good dictator, instead of being only a good man.

* * * * *

In the billiard-room, near the Czar's study, maps of the various fronts in the Great War are laid out, just as the Czar left them. In the library are the works of Mrs. Belloc-Lowndes, Messrs. E. F. Benson, H. G. Wells, and Bernard Shaw. In the Czarina's bedroom the walls are plastered with icons and photographs of relations and friends, including one of Rasputin. From the upper storey to the big drawing-room a slide has been left from the days when the girls were children, and the Czarevitch's toy motor-car stands in a corner.

"You will note the number of icons and other evidences of superstition in these rooms," said the interpreter, "and the bad bourgeois taste of the furniture."

I duly noted it.

"The Romanoffs were out of touch with the spirit of the age," she continued.

* * * * *

Out of touch! Well he might be! I remembered that the Czar, whatever his defects as a ruler, lacked neither conscience nor courage, for he had repeatedly declared that he would live and die in Russia.

The Bolsheviks could find no Russians to murder him, so the guard was replaced by one composed of foreigners. The commander, Jurovski, was a watchmaker in Tomsk, who had renounced the Jewish religion to become a Lutheran.

At midnight on July 16th-17th Jurovski went to the rooms in which the prisoners slept, and woke them, telling them that they were to be moved elsewhere. The Czar carried the Czarevitch downstairs in his arms. He was followed by the Czarina, the four Grand Duchesses, the Court physician, three servants, and Anastasia's pet cairn, Jimmy. The black spaniel, Joy, was left behind in the hurry. They were taken to an empty room. The Czarevitch, unable to stand, owing to an inflamed knee, sat on the floor. The Czar asked for chairs. Three were brought.

Minutes passed. No one spoke. The little Court knew well the weariness of these sudden journeys and long waits, but they were spared the knowledge of what was to come.

Suddenly Jurovski arrived, followed by nine men with revolvers. He said to the Czar: "Your friends tried to rescue you, but they didn't succeed. Now we must kill you!" The Czar did not understand. He had only time to say "What?" before Jurovski shot him. At the same moment the nine other men opened fire on the Empress and the other members of the household. The Czarevitch fell on his face, groaning. Anastasia shrieked; they finished her off with bayonets, and the dog.

The room was full of the smell of blood and cordite. The ten men wrapped up the corpses in sheets, and loaded them into a waiting truck, after pocketing some ruby and diamond ikons, and other jewellery. They drove to a

clearing in a neighbouring forest, where, under Jurovski's directions, the bodies were stripped, and hacked into convenient pieces for burning. Jurovski set the bonfire alight, and poured motor oil upon the flames. When all had been burned, sulphuric acid was mixed with the ashes.

But in Russia to-day a sequel to the story passes from lip to lip. The Czarevitch, on his way to heaven, remembered Joy, and returned to comfort him. He found him outside the door, very puzzled and hungry. "We are not dead," he said. "The others have gone on a journey, but I will always stay here, and walk the Russian earth."

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"The Empress was as superstitious as any peasant," the interpreter explained. "She ruined Russia with her icons and her cult of Rasputin."

* * * * *

I went, of course, to several Anti-God Museums. In Leningrad, in what was once St. Isaac's Cathedral, the chief exhibit consists of a Lasalle's pendulum suspended from the dome, whose deflection is a proof of the rotation of the earth. "This experiment is forbidden in Christian countries," our guide told us. He called himself a Professor of Comparative Religion.

"A pendulum like this could not be exhibited in London or New York," he continued, "for it would conflict with the doctrines of Christianity."

In St. Isaac's I saw also a photograph of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald at prayer, the body of a mummified bishop, the castration appliances by which the *alto* voices of a famous choir were preserved, pictures of soldiers having their weapons blessed, and a jumble of tawdry trivialities.

At the entrance to St. Basil's in Moscow the following aphorisms of Lenin stand in bold type:

THE FIGHT AGAINST RELIGION
IS THE FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM

and

CHRISTIANITY IS DESIGNED
FOR THE EXPLOITATION OF THE MASSES.

"Our preaching of atheism," said Lenin, "must be co-ordinated with our main task, the development of the class-struggle."

"Communists who hinder the broadest development of anti-religious propaganda have no place in the ranks of the Party," said Stalin.

"If you are not a convinced atheist, you will not be a good Communist, and a faithful citizen of the Communist State," writes *The League of Communist Youth*. "Atheism is permanently linked with Communism, and the two ideals are the basis of the Soviet power in Communist Russia." And so on, *ad infinitum*.

A big new short-wave station is to be erected in Moscow to broadcast the propaganda of the League of the Militant Godless in German, English, Dutch, Spanish, Polish, and Czech. A printing-works, employing 6,000 workers, with founts for 13 languages, will also be devoted to the labours of this League. At present, Moscow Radios 1 and 2 send out 48 hours a week of propaganda (political as well as atheistic) in foreign languages: 7 hours in English, 7 in French, 9 in Spanish, 9 in German, 7 in Italian, 3 in Czech, 3 in Hungarian, and 1 each in Dutch, Swedish, and Flemish.

One thousand six hundred churches in Moscow have

been closed by the Communists. Last Easter an Archbishop, a Bishop, and twenty-five clergy were arrested. No one knows what became of them, and the people who are so solicitous over the fate of Pastor Niemöller in Germany have written no letters to *The Times* about them; nor have they protested about the Chapel of Saint Tycho in Moscow being turned into a public lavatory.

During the first six months of 1938 more than 600 churches were closed in Russia. Persecution is not confined to the Orthodox Church. In pre-war Russia there were 410 Roman Catholic churches, with 8 Bishops and 810 priests: now there are 11 churches with 10 priests.

The ideas of the Bolsheviks on art are very similar to their attitude towards religion. Everything is useless which is not in the "general line of the Party"—that narrow but nebulous path which so many of the Old-Guard Bolsheviks have failed to tread.

From St. Basil's I went on to pay a visit to the Gallery of Western Art, which houses one of the finest collections of modern paintings in the world, acquired not by the Bolsheviks (to whom, however, credit should be given for its preservation) but by two capitalists before the Revolution. Over the doorway a streamer proclaims in bold type:

**"LET US FIGHT IN A BOLSHEVIK WAY
FOR THE GENERAL LINE OF THE PARTY
AND EXPOSE THE MANŒUVRES OF
TROTSKYISM!"**

In the Degas and Manet room I read: "This is the epoch of Capitalism growing into Imperialism: 1870." Cézanne is described as the artist of the great industrial bourgeoisie. Van Gogh "illustrates the psychology of

the petty-bourgeois under the blight of capitalism." Picasso is labelled as "the exponent of the Proletarian Revolt and the Bolshevik *tempo* in industrialization."

In the last room I observed a questionnaire for visitors, with a box into which answers could be put. One of the questions was: "In what way does Cézanne's art reveal the contradictions of Capitalist society?" Another: "Tell us what you think of this Gallery as a weapon in the class-struggle?"

Always this insistence on class-war! Stalin is quite clear on the subject. "The rich experience of history," he said to Mr. H. G. Wells, "has taught us Communists that the ruling classes will not yield their possessions without a struggle. Without getting rid of the capitalist, and abolishing the principle of private property, it is impossible to create a planned economy."*

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On March 8th, 1917, soldiers began fraternizing with the strikers from the Putiloff works in Petrograd. The Czar was blind to what was happening. Four days later the war-weary troops in the capital revolted, sacked arsenals, opened jails, occupied the Winter Palace and the Admiralty. Stalin returned, unnoticed, and almost unknown save to his comrades. Lenin arrived three weeks later, with that sinister trio, Trotsky, Zinoviev, Radek, sent to Russia by the German High Command, whose spies and paid agents they were.

Kerensky's star, however, was still in the ascendant. In July he began his foolish offensive. While he orated, the Bolsheviks plotted to overthrow all talkers and theorists. They promised action: to the soldiers peace,

* "The Stalin-Wells Talk," published by the *New Statesman* in 1934. This is a shorthand record of the conversation of two highly intelligent men at cross purposes.

to the peasants land, and bread for all. Quickly their influence grew.

The course of the November *coup d'état* was simple, and comparatively bloodless. Already in August the Bolsheviks had held a conference, under Stalin's direction, in which the Duma was discredited. Parliamentary institutions had served their purpose: now the slogan was "All power to the Soviets!" Trotsky formed a military revolutionary committee to defend Petrograd on October 26th, 1917. On November 3rd he demanded that all orders should be countersigned by him. On the 5th, while the Duma debated all night, he occupied the nerve-centres of the capital—telegraph offices, railway stations, garrisons, banks, treasuries, municipal buildings—with special detachments of Communists. It is the well-tryed technique of revolution, invented by Napoleon.

Lenin came out of hiding on November 6th (he had escaped to Finland, against his wish, but at the urgent desire of the Party, who would not risk losing him in the retribution which followed the unsuccessful April rising), and soon the administration of the Empire had passed into his capable hands.

On November 7th, 1917, the members of the Provisional Government capitulated. They had been besieged in the Winter Palace, with the guns of the cruiser *Aurora* and of the Peter and Paul fortress trained on them, and Trotsky had summoned them to "a ruthless fight." Had they not surrendered they would all have been blown to pieces, together with their defenders. They saved their lives for the moment, but most of them were liquidated later.

Then the counter-revolution began. Through those days of terror and tragedy, it is the figure of Trotsky that looms largest, but Stalin was also active, dogged, capable. His burly frame never knew exhaustion. His shrewd, cynical eyes noted everything. He went everywhere,

restoring morale, organizing communications, weeding-out shirkers, strengthening doubtful groups. Nobody liked him, for he was surly and suspicious, but nobody could doubt his capacity. His chief work was not military, but political. As a Georgian, he was well-suited to become the first Commissar of Nationalities, and it was his decree which gave nominal freedom and equality to the subject-races of the old Empire.

In 1922, Lenin appointed him General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, and soon regretted that he had done so. "This cook," he said, "will make too hot a stew." Nor did he leave it at that, for his dying wish was that Stalin should not be given too much power.

This remarkable testament of Lenin runs as follows, omitting an unimportant first paragraph :

"Our party is supported by men of two different opinions; its break-up is therefore possible, and, if we do not arrive at an understanding between these divergencies, it must almost inevitably suffer a setback. If it does suffer a setback, it will be useless to seek remedies, or to discuss means of strengthening the Central Committee. In such an event, nothing could prevent an eventual break-up. But I hope that this contingency is so distant in time, and also so improbable, that it is not necessary to discuss it to-day.

"I am thinking to-day of a consolidation as a guarantee against a break-up in the near future, and I intend to make here a series of personal observations. I think that the original cause of the present dangers" (this was written in 1922), "as well as the key to a new consolidation, relates to certain members of the Central Committee, such as Stalin and Trotsky. The relations that exist between them represent, to my mind, a good half of the danger of a break-up. This danger can certainly be avoided, and might more easily be avoided, I think, if the number of members of the Central Committee were increased from fifty to one hundred.

"Comrade Stalin, who has become Secretary-General, has gathered great power into his hands, and I am not at all certain that he will always be able to use this power with suffi-

cient circumspection. On the other hand, Comrade Trotsky possesses remarkable capacities, as he has shown in his fight in the Central Committee on the subject of the Commissariat for Road Transport. Personally he is without question the most capable member of the present Central Committee; however, he has an exaggerated opinion of his capacities, and an exaggerated desire to regulate economic life by dictatorial methods.

"The divergencies of opinion between these two chiefs, who are the most capable men in the present Central Committee, might lead to a break-up of the Party, entirely against their wishes, if our Party does not take measures to avoid it; and this break-up might occur in an unforeseen way. I do not intend to describe further the other members of the Central Committee, or to mention their personal qualities. I will mention only that the episodes of October in which Zinoviev and Kamenev figured, were obviously not chance events, and that no more personal significance should be attached to them than to the former non-adhesion to Bolshevism of Trotsky.

"I would like to say a few words about two junior members of the Central Committee, Bukharin and Piatakov. They represent, in my opinion, the most capable of the newcomers; but, in their regard, the following should not be forgotten: Bukharin is not only the most valuable and able theorist of the party, but he may also be considered, quite frankly, as its favourite. Nevertheless, his theoretical opinions must not be considered as entirely Marxist, except with the greatest caution, because he has something of the pedant in him, and he has never studied dialectic. (Indeed, I think he does not understand it.)

"Piatakov, on the other hand, is undoubtedly a man of talent and strong will; but he is far too much attracted to the bureaucratic and autocratic aspect of affairs to be reliable on serious political questions. Naturally these observations relate only to the present time, and have force only if these two talented and honest co-workers of ours do not find occasion to extend their knowledge and to remedy their narrowness of spirit.

"*Postscript.*—Stalin is ruthless, and although this defect is bearable amongst us Communists it will be absolutely intolerable in the office of Secretary-General. This is why I propose to the comrades to find a means of removing him from this post, and of giving it to someone else who should be different from Stalin in every way: better than him in all

personal contacts, that is, more patient, more loyal, more polite, more attentive to comrades, less fanatical. These things may seem unimportant, but with regard to the prevention of a break-up, and in the light of what has been said above concerning the relation between Stalin and Trotsky, they are not trifles, or at any rate they are trifles which may have a decisive importance.

“LENIN.

“4 January, 1923.”

Impatient, disloyal, rude, absolutely unsuitable for a position of high command: such was Lenin's verdict on the man who rules 170,000,000 people to-day, with a more powerful police and a better army than any Czar possessed.

As soon as Stalin was installed in the Kremlin (Lenin died before his intolerable friend could be removed) he began to consolidate his power. His methods, Asiatic in their subtlety and patience, have left him alone in his glory, the most ruthless ruler in history.

The Left Wing of the Party, led by the Messianic-minded Trotsky, and supported by Zinoviev and Kamenev, wanted immediate world revolution, immediate collectivization of the peasants, immediate extermination of the *kulaks*. The Right Wing, led by Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomskey, wanted the farmers “to grow peacefully into Socialism.”

Stalin dealt with the Right Wing first, and piecemeal. He combined with Rykov to eliminate Bukharin, who was disgraced, and recanted; was forgiven, but not forgotten, and was finally liquidated in 1938. Rykov was also shot. Tomskey saved Stalin the trouble of a trial by committing suicide.

Trotsky, by far the most dangerous rival, behaved like a spoilt child by refusing to attend Lenin's funeral. Stalin elbowed him out of power, craftily, inexorably, until in 1925 he was strong enough to exile him. Zinoviev and Kamenev were disgraced soon afterwards, recanted like

the Right-Wing stalwarts, and like them were forgiven, but not forgotten, and were executed in 1937.

The turn of the peasants came in 1932, when they refused to be collectivized. Stalin sent his agents to collect their crops. Five millions died of famine next year. Perhaps six millions. The exact number will never be known.

I once visited the Mahout of a Sikh temple, who had planned the murder of a hundred people. He arranged for professional assassins to shoot his victims down, petrol to pour on their bodies, etc. All went according to plan except that he only bagged forty. He was well defended at his trial, when his advocate claimed that he had not planned murder, but only the protection of his temple and his religious beliefs. I found him an agreeable, gentle-mannered person; and he was not hung. So Stalin, when accused of having caused the death of between seven and twelve million persons, can say that he acted with the best intentions and highest ideals. His victims died that Communism might live.

As to the world revolution, it remains in the womb of time. First-hand information on Stalin's views in this connection can be obtained from a preface which he wrote to his speeches in 1924, at the height of his controversy with Trotsky.* After discussing the October Revolution, which he admits was accomplished without a proletarian majority behind the Communists (that is, presumably against the wishes of the people), he gives the following reasons for its success:

- (a) The exhaustion created by the Great War.
- (b) "The powerful slogan of Peace."
- (c) The active sympathy of Communists outside Russia.

* *La Révolution d'Octobre et la tactique des communistes russes*, by J. Stalin. Bureau d'Editions, Paris, 1936.

He continues: "A weak point, however, was that the October Revolution had no neighbouring Soviet State on which to lean. It is certain that the future revolution in Germany will find itself, in this respect, in a better position owing to the presence of a State as powerful as our Soviet Russia."

The remainder of this preface is taken up with a discussion of Trotsky's theory that Communism can only succeed by means of a "permanent world revolution," as against Lenin's directive of "Socialism in one country." The fine points of the argument are now academic, for the two men want the same thing, although they hope to achieve it by different means: Trotsky wants immediate action, whereas Stalin is working through the League of Nations, Popular Fronts, Peace Societies, etc., to bring about the collapse of capitalism they both desire. Communism has not changed from the objectives indicated by Marx. It is merely tacking against the breeze raised by its opponents and trying to approach its goal obliquely. Nothing could be clearer or more convincing than the following statements of Lenin, quoted with approval by his successor:

"The dictatorship of the proletariat, if one translates into simpler language this scientific Latin historico-philosophical expression, means this: only a certain class, namely, urban workers, and, in general, industrial workers in factories, is capable of directing the whole mass of workers and exploited people in the fight for the overthrow of the capitalist yoke, in the fight to preserve and consolidate the victory, and in the work of founding the new Socialistic régime.

"The victory of Socialism is possible at first in a small number of capitalist countries, or even in one capitalist country alone. The victorious proletariat of this country, after having expropriated the capitalists, and organized its internal Socialist production, will attack the rest of the capitalist world, drawing to itself the oppressed classes of other countries, urging them to rise against the capitalists, even employing, if necessary, armed force against the exploit-

ing classes and their countries. The free union of nations under Socialism is impossible without an obstinate struggle, of uncertain duration, between Socialist Republics and backward nations."

Last year M. Stalin wrote to a certain Ivanov, a Young Communist, who had been accused of Trotskyism for saying that "Communism cannot be considered to be definitely established as long as the Soviet Union is surrounded by hostile capitalist countries."

M. Stalin agreed with Ivanov, whom he absolved from fault. Trotsky's heresy, said Stalin, was to hold that Socialism could not be set up in Russia before it was established in the whole world. But Socialism has been established in Russia. Now there is the further question: Can it be maintained and made secure? Only, says Stalin, "*by uniting the efforts of the world-wide proletariat to those of our own people. Mutual assistance must be organized to combat capitalism.*"

The *Temps* of Paris published a leading article pointing out the association between M. Stalin's policy and the Popular Front in France.* In England the correspondence with young Ivanov passed almost unnoticed, although it was reported in full in the newspapers of Germany, Italy, and Poland.

* * * * *

In preparation for world revolution, whose most suitable prelude would be a world war, Lenin instituted the Third (Communist) International, generally known as the Comintern, in the spring of 1918. A group of foreign Communists had assembled in Moscow early that year. Lenin appointed an eloquent young firebrand, Zinoviev-Apfelbaum, to organize them into the advance-guard of the revolutionary workers of the world.

* *Russia's Work in France*, by R. J. Dingle. Hale, 1938.

Sir Paul Dukes was present at the first meeting of the Comintern, in Petrograd in March, 1918.* He describes the speakers shivering on a tribune in their fur-coats, their faces blue with cold, saying the same things over and over again, punctuated by the strains of the "Internationale" and cries of "Down with the bourgeoisie!" . . . Those were the evangelical days of Communism,† when the oppressed peoples of the earth, and many cranks, looked towards Moscow to shatter our "sorry scheme of things," and rebuild it nearer to the heart's desire of the incapable.

But the rulers of Russia were not incapables, and had little interest in the species. In 1921, when Communism had already brought Russia near collapse, and the sailors in Kronstadt had revolted, Lenin returned to the capitalist system, which he called the New Economic Policy. The sailors were shot, but the principle of private trading was re-established.

The Comintern, however, continued its propaganda with ever-increasing funds. Schools for international revolution are flourishing to-day in Moscow and in Tashkent. In the latter, Indian students have employed their time to such good purpose that Bengal and the United Provinces are now seething with unrest.

Communist intrigue throughout the world is matter of history. Here only the main facts are set down, in an effort to represent their results in terms of human life. If the list is wearisome to the eye and mind, the reader should reflect how much more tedious these incidents were for the individuals and nations concerned:

In 1918 some 6,000 persons were murdered in Finland,

* *The Story of S.T. 25*, by Sir Paul Dukes. Cassell, 1938.

† Zinoviev was then a lanky youth with burning eyes and a real gift of oratory; but he soon grew fat, and was eventually shot as a "filthy traitor." It is said that at the time of his death there were 10,000,000 francs (say, £100,000) to his credit in a Paris bank.

or fell in the struggle against Communism. In Esthonia, Communists shot 3,000 small shop-keepers and traders because they were "capitalists." In Germany and Austria there were several risings inspired by Communists.

In 1919 a reign of terror was established in Budapest by the Communist agitator Bela Kun, which will long live in the memory of Hungarians. In Munich a Soviet was established, whose members murdered the hostages they had captured, robbing them and mutilating their bodies. In Berlin, Dr. Oscar Cohen admitted that he had received 4,000,000 roubles (say £800,000) from the Soviet Ambassador, the late M. Joffe, for the purpose of fostering world revolution.

In 1920 the Bolsheviki invaded Poland, and were defeated at Warsaw. In Italy, Communism grew in power from 1920 to 1922, and led to the reaction which culminated in Mussolini's march on Rome in 1922.

In 1923 there were Communist risings in Germany and Bulgaria. Bela Kun, who had escaped from Budapest after his four months' rule in 1919, was sent by his Moscow masters to the Crimea, where he liquidated 70,000 people with machine-guns.

In 1926 a General Strike broke out in England, encouraged by Moscow. It was ended by the common sense of all classes. In China 186,000 people fell victims to Red terrorism, which had begun the previous year.

In 1927 a Soviet commercial company in London, "Arcos," was raided. Strike orders for English workers were discovered, but the documents were somewhat inconclusive. Communist riots in Vienna resulted in many deaths and injuries. In Boston, two Communist murderers, Sacco and Vanzetti, were hung amidst protests from sympathizers throughout the world.

In 1928 many Communist disturbances occurred in South America. Between 1927 and 1929 20,000 people

were murdered in Mexico as a direct result of Communist activities.

In 1929 fierce street fighting occurred in various parts of Germany, where Communism grew apace, with even worse results than in Italy. Berlin was a sink of iniquity: German Communist writings of the time prove that the disintegration of youth was one of the means by which it was hoped to produce a revolutionary situation.*

In 1931 the King of Spain was driven from his throne, and Communists began a systematic preparation for the civil war which broke out in 1934, and again in 1936. In Sweden small but sanguinary conflicts occurred between Communists and police.

In 1933 the Reichstag in Berlin was burned down, soon after Hitler's accession to power, by a half-witted youth who confessed to the crime, and who had belonged to the Dutch Communist Party.

In 1934 bloody fighting broke out in North Spain, which resulted in more than 4,000 casualties. There was street-fighting in Paris, led by Communists, mass strikes in San Francisco, a revolt in Vienna, in which 260 persons were killed and 2,500 wounded, and a Communist revolt in Amsterdam.

In 1935 there were peasant revolts in Lithuania inspired by Communists, and a revolt in Brazil in which 150 people were killed and 400 injured.

In 1936 the Civil War broke out in Spain. From that date to the present day the international tension in Europe is too recent to need recapitulation.

But in addition to these large-scale manoeuvres the Comintern has instigated abroad a number of murders and outrages (chiefly against its own subjects, it is true) which turn a searchlight on its methods. For instance:

* See page 142.

Kalinitkov, an anti-Bolshevik writer, was murdered at Sofia on July 24th, 1924.

Kosta Georgiev, a Bulgarian General, was murdered at Sofia on April 14th, 1925.

The Cathedral at Sofia was blown up by Communists on April 16th, 1925. Two hundred and ten people were killed and 600 wounded. It has been said that Gregori Dimitrov, the present head of the Communist International, instigated this outrage, but the charge is not proven, although he was active in Bulgaria at the time.

Petlioura, a Ukrainian chieftain, was murdered in Paris on May 25th, 1926, by a Soviet agent, Schwartzbart, who is now back in the U.S.S.R.

Joseph Traikovich, a Polish citizen, was drawn into a trap at the Soviet Legation at Warsaw and murdered on September 2nd, 1927.

Kritorov, a former Staff officer of General Sakarov, was drawn into a trap in a Soviet Consulate in North China and murdered in March, 1928.

Koutieпов, a Russian General, was kidnapped in Paris on January 26th, 1930. The G.P.U. has been freely accused of this crime, but the French police have never been able to discover the culprits. The General was chief of the White Russian émigrés in Paris. According to the confession of Andrei Fikner, former secretary of the Soviet Embassy in Berlin, who has since disappeared, leaving no trace of his whereabouts, he (Fikner) was head of the G.P.U. squad which seized the General in a busy street of Paris and carried him to a waiting car. Koutieпов struggled; he was given an anæsthetic to quiet him, and the drug killed him. His body was taken to the Soviet Embassy in Paris and dismembered. The pieces were put into small coffins and taken to the cemetery for dogs in Asnières. The head was carried there in a somewhat larger coffin, and a woman, playing the rôle of owner,

arrived at Asnières with a wreath and a card for "Toto cheri!" Whatever the truth about his fate, General Koutieпов has never been heard of since his disappearance, and it is presumed that he has been murdered.

Ramichvili, a former Home Minister of Georgia, was murdered by Russians in Paris on December 7th, 1930.

Jean Pommer, Orthodox Archbishop at Riga, was murdered by the G.P.U. on October 12th, 1934.

Andres Nin, a Spanish anarchist leader, was kidnapped by G.P.U. agents at Barcelona in August, 1937. He has disappeared since then, and has probably been murdered.

Ignace Reiss, former agent of the G.P.U., was murdered near Lausanne in September, 1937, having been enticed thither by a Communist girl spy.

General Miller, a White Russian, was kidnapped in Paris on September 29th, 1937, it is said by G.P.U. agents. He is said to have been lured into a house adjacent to the Soviet Embassy. Since his disappearance efforts to trace him have proved unavailing and it is presumed that he has been murdered.

Erwin Wolff, Trotsky's secretary, was kidnapped in Barcelona on October 13th, 1937, by G.P.U. agents. He has disappeared since then, and has probably been murdered.

Marc Rhein, who wrote a report on labour camps in the U.S.S.R., was kidnapped by G.P.U. agents in November, 1937, at Barcelona. He has disappeared since then, and has probably been murdered.

Bernini, a former Communist Professor, was kidnapped in November, 1937, by persons unknown while staying in the South of France. He has disappeared since then, and has probably been murdered.

Tamara Solonievich and her secretary, Mikhailov, were killed at Sofia by the explosion of a bomb sent by post from Russia on February 3rd, 1938.

Among Russian diplomatic agents abroad, a large number have suffered for the greater glory of the Comintern. In England, for instance, M. Rakovsky and Colonel Putna were recalled to Moscow and shot; Captain Tchikounsky, naval attaché, Lieutenant Sivkov, naval attaché, and Captain Tchorny, air attaché, were recalled to Moscow and have disappeared. MM. Osersky and Bron, trade mission officials, were arrested and have disappeared. A former Ambassador, M. Sokolnikov, has been sentenced to ten years' penal servitude.

In Poland the following gentlemen disappeared from the Embassy: Davtian, Alexandrov, Postnikov, Barabanov, Vinogradov. Their whereabouts are now unknown.

In Germany the following casualties occurred at the Soviet Embassy: MM. Krestinsky (shot), Youreniev (recalled to Moscow and disappeared), Nepomniachtchy (recalled to Moscow and sent to Siberia).

In Spain the Ambassador, M. Rosenberg, was recalled to Moscow and arrested. M. Antonovsesenko was recalled to Moscow and shot, and M. Kogan was summoned to return to Moscow, but preferred to commit suicide at once.

In Esthonia, M. Oustinov died mysteriously, M. Petrovsky disappeared, and M. Stark was recalled to Moscow and shot.

In Latvia, M. Brodovsky was recalled to Moscow and shot, M. Pokhvalinsky was recalled and disappeared.

In Lithuania, M. Podolsky was recalled and shot.

In Finland, M. Ivanov was arrested and disappeared, M. Asmus was recalled to Moscow and shot, M. Briskine was recalled and disappeared.

In Italy, M. Levine was recalled and died mysteriously.

In Belgium, M. Rubinine was recalled and disappeared.

In Hungary, M. Beksadian was recalled and shot.

In Greece, M. Kobetzky was recalled and died mysteriously. M. Barmine escaped to avoid arrest, and wrote a remarkable series of articles for the *New York Times* on December 23rd, 25th, and 29th, 1937.

In Turkey, M. Karsky was recalled and disappeared, and M. Karakhan was recalled and shot.

In China, M. Bogomolov was recalled and disappeared.

In Japan, M. Rink was recalled and shot.

In Czecho-Slovakia, M. Aronsef and his wife were recalled and both shot.

In France, now the headquarters of the Western Branch of the Communist International, the mortality has been particularly heavy. Among diplomatic representatives, the following are casualties: General Semionov, military attaché (shot), MM. Chliapnikov (exiled), Rakovsky (arrested, now dead), Davtian (arrested), Nachatiri (exiled), Arens (arrested), Tchlenov (arrested), Lachkevich (arrested), Neumann (arrested), Rosenberg (arrested), Loukianov (arrested), Raikevski (arrested), Victor Kin (arrested).

Of members of the Committee of Debts the following were shot: MM. Preobrajensky, Reingold, and Navachinc.

Trade agents in various capitals have also suffered heavily: amongst those shot have been MM. Mdivani and Piatakov. Other casualties include MM. Lomovsky (exiled), Toumanov (disappeared), Lomov (arrested), Kossior (exiled), Gourevich (disappeared), Ostrovsky (arrested), Mouradian (arrested), Slivkine (arrested), Moskalev (arrested), Papanine (arrested), Goikberg (arrested), Satulovsky (arrested), Mcjlaouk (arrested).

Of the victims inside Russia, no foreigner can keep count. Zinoviev, Kamenev, Smirnov, Bukharin, Rykov, Tomsky, Piatakov, Yagoda, Tukachevsky, are some well-known names, but all the active leaders of the Revolution have been liquidated.

When Lenin was buried on January 27th, 1924, the guard of honour standing by his hearse was changed every ten minutes. Little did those mourners anticipate their fates!

The first guard consisted of Stalin and Kalinin, who are living, and Zinoviev and Kamenev, who have both been shot.

The second guard consisted of Molotov, who is living, Bukharin and Rykov, who were shot, and Tomsy, who committed suicide to escape the OGPU.

The third guard consisted of Djerjinsky and Chicherin, who both died, Petrovsky, who has disappeared, and Sokolnikov, who is in prison.

The fourth guard consisted of Kourbaetcheff and Orjonikidze, who died, and Piatakov and Jenekidze, who were both shot.

Out of sixteen Heroes of the Revolution, only three are living in freedom; six have been shot as traitors, and one has been "suicided," four are dead, one a convict, and the fate of one is doubtful.

A notable feature of these purges is the uncertainty that so often shrouds the fate of distinguished Bolsheviks. The more eminent the victim, the more misty his end. For instance, no one knew what had happened to Admiral Orloff, the Commander-in-Chief of the Red Navy, until Marshal Voroshilov, the Commander-in-Chief of the Red Army, mentioned in a speech that he had been "wiped off the face of the earth as a traitor and a spy."

Another extraordinary episode, which reveals the cat-like methods of M. Stalin, is the decline and fall of Yagoda, the ex-chemist's assistant, who rose to be chief of the G.P.U. and who tracked down the alleged accomplices of the murderer of Kirov.

After Yagoda had executed fourteen persons for this murder—committed by one man, Leonide Nicolaev—he

arrested sixteen others, of whom the most important were Zinoviev and Kamenev. For eighteen months he interrogated them in the Loubianka Prison, bringing them to public trial only in August, 1936.

Whether or not Zinoviev and Kamenev had been promised their lives if they "confessed" will never be known. Their hair had turned white, and they were almost unrecognizable when they appeared before their judges. In court they acknowledged that they had indeed plotted to assassinate Stalin, Kirov, and Voroshilov and to commit other crimes. The sixteen were shot on August 25th, 1936, the date when the Revolution began to eat its own children in earnest.

Now comes the strangest part of the story. Within a month of this execution, out of a seemingly clear sky, the lightning fell on Yagoda himself. On September 27th he was deprived of his functions and given a minor office. In April, 1937, he was arrested. In March, 1938, after a year in the Loubianka tasting his own medicine, he was tried on various charges of treason and conspiracy, including complicity in the murder of Kirov! One of the minor charges was that he had poisoned Maxim Gorky and his son. When he denied this, the public prosecutor, Vichinsky, was roused to fury.*

VICHINSKY: "Why did you admit this in your previous evidence?"

YAGODA: "I was lying then, and I beg you, Comrade Procurator, not to ask me for my reasons."

Sensation. Sitting suspended. Next day Vichinsky asked Yagoda the same question. Accused did not reply at first, but at last, very slowly, he admitted his guilt. There was discreet laughter in court.

Yagoda admitted that he poisoned Gorki's son, not for

* Summarized from *Les Maîtres de la Tcheka*, by Roman Goul, Editions de France, 1938.

political reasons, but because the latter's wife was one of his mistresses. Two doctors confirmed this story. The chief physician of the Kremlin Hospital, Dr. Levine, said that he was sixty-eight and did not care for his own life, but that Yagoda threatened the lives of his wife and children if his orders were disobeyed. Dr. Kasakov gave details of the laboratories in the G.P.U. headquarters, where Yagoda used to prepare his poisons and carry out his experiments upon prisoners.

Yagoda, like the majority of the Bolsheviks at bay, ended with an abject plea for mercy. "I do not minimize the gravity of my crimes," he cried. "I am guilty of every count in my accusation. But Soviet law is not founded on vengeance, and I implore pardon. I ask you, my judges, and I ask you, Comrade Stalin, to pardon me if you can."

The late Chief of the Secret Police must have been shaken indeed to thus waste his breath! On the night of March 15th he was put against the bloodstained wall in the Loubianka, where he had watched so many "enemies of the Proletariat and Fascist reptiles" meet their doom. . . .

And this is the city of which Mr. Gunther wrote (in 1935, it is true, but the phrase remains unaltered in the 1937 edition of his brilliant book) that "Moscow was the most refreshing city on the Continent";* and in which M. Thorez, the leader of the French Communists, recently extolled "the victorious building of Socialism, the miracles of industrialism and collectivisation, the well-being, the cultural blossoming of a free people.† Glory to the Bolshevik Party!" he concluded. "Glory to Lenin, who led the working class to power over one-sixth

* *Inside Europe*, by John Gunther. Hamish Hamilton.

† Report of the *Seventh Communist International*, held in Moscow in August, 1937.

of the world! Glory to Stalin, our beloved leader, whose genius has solved the problem of Socialism in the U.S.S.R. and who is leading the industrial Proletariat to victory!"

* * * * *

The *Rykov*, in which I sailed to Russia,* was due to leave London Bridge at midnight, but before retiring we learned that the crew had just discovered that the engine was not in working order.

I looked down a hatchway at 2 a.m. and saw gloomy comrades in the bowels of the ship, smoking cigarettes over a stripped cylinder-head. At noon next day we dropped down river with the tide. But the engine was not yet right. Any fool could hear that she was missing. Sure enough she broke down again at Greenwich, and again at Gravesend, and again in the Kiel Canal, so that we arrived in Leningrad thirty-six hours late.

Nor was this an exceptional occurrence, for a passenger informed me that on the return journey the *Rykov's* engines collapsed for the usual twenty-four hours. Yet in the "Lenin corner" of the *Rykov*, where the Pagod of the Proletariat was enshrined in red bunting, there was a graph showing that during the last eight months this ship had rarely fallen below 5 per cent. of her maximum efficiency!

On the *Martina*, a Volga steamer, the engines seemed to be more or less efficient, but we started six hours late in Gorki and arrived thirty-six hours late in Stalingrad. The Responsible Worker in charge of the bathroom water supply rarely remembered to turn it on. The decks were never scrubbed. Brasswork was unpolished. Hawsters were not flaked down. Litter was lying everywhere. I washed in a cracked basin from a leaky tap. The sanitary

* I am indebted to the editor of the *Spectator* for permission to use certain passages from articles I wrote for that journal.

arrangements reeked to heaven. The Soviet Government has liquidated many things, but not its lavatories.

I would not mention such details if they were not symptomatic of much else. But they are symptomatic. Can people who cannot remember to pull a plug build up a great industrial nation? It is at least open to doubt.

I wish that a British working man could have stood with me on the deck of the *Martina* as the ship berthed at Samara pier. . . . At the quayside the Proletariat crouched amidst its enormous bundles of personal property. Every day it was told by loud-speakers, banner slogans, wall newspapers, Young Communists, Red Guards, that it was the ruler of the country. The bourgeoisie is dead! Long live the Proletariat!

Now see the Responsible Workers putting out a gangway. A struggle begins for first place on board. The Proletariat must have its ticket, else it is pushed aside in Russia as ruthlessly as in less paradisaical lands. It fights its way forward, carrying feather beds, sacks of melons, baskets, boxes, babies on its strong back. On the lower deck it is packed and pressed down like the black caviare of Astrakhan. We, together with the most responsible of the Responsible Workers—foremen, engineers, technicians, all the aristocrats of Communism—look down on the Toiling Masses from the first-class. There are six classes—two firsts, two seconds, a third, and a fourth.

Liberty, Equality, Fraternity! Is it for this that a million Russians have suffered "the supreme measure of social defence"?

* * * * *

In Autostroy, at Gorki,* 60,000 Ford cars should have

* So the Bolsheviki have renamed the fascinating city of Nijni-Novgorod, where the biggest fair in the world was held each spring in the days when Russians had property to sell.

been produced in 1932, the output rising rapidly to 400,000 cars a year in 1936. At the time of my visit not one car that ran satisfactorily had come off the production line. By the end of the year the manager asserted that 7,500 had been made, but the claim was doubtful, and later on the manager was shot. In 1935 the output was said to be 63,000. In 1936, instead of the 400,000 cars planned, it was claimed that 90,000 were produced. Reliable informants, however, have told me that the early Russian Fords fell to pieces if driven over thirty miles an hour. To-day things are only slightly better. There is a 42 horse-power limousine, known as the M-1, which would be dear at £200 in England, and which costs the equivalent of £2,000, and a luxury saloon, the ZIZ101, which only super-planners can afford. Production still moves with laggard feet, for reasons which are obvious to anyone who has ever seen a Communist factory at work.

When people tell me that the Bolsheviks will have 20,000 aeroplanes by 1940—or is it 40,000?—I remember my experiences at Autostroy. The foundry there reminds me of something out of the Russian ballet. Glowing ore is swaying overhead upon conveyors. A girl like a goddess operates a trip hammer. Three men, stripped to the waist, seize a lump of metal with titanic pincers and crash it down upon a pedestal. It is magnificent, and it would be the Five-Year Plan if anything commensurate with such efforts came off in the production line.

Here is a moulder at work on a cylinder-casting. He has made six cores in sand: it is a very delicate job, which would take even the most skilled worker the best part of a morning. An expert in our party gauges it, and discovers that it is a quarter of an inch out of truth.

A quarter of an inch! Furious, the foreman (a Russian, trained in America) thrusts his fist through the mould

and smashes it. From the matter-of-fact way in which the moulder regards this destruction of his labour it would seem to be a common occurrence.

In the tool-testing room one of the girls is idly twisting the screw of her micrometer gauge. "Treated like that," says our expert, "it will last about a week." Her pay is 450 roubles a month.

In the next shed there is a caricature poster, evidently in criticism of an unpopular foreman. "*This is the man,*" the inscription runs, "*who does not encourage the young steel workers to attend evening classes in rhetoric, and who does not attend them himself!*"

Who would be so hard-hearted as to discourage the steel-workers from attending evening classes? After all, a knowledge of rhetoric will be much more useful to them than skill at bench and lathe. (Often since, when reading of Russia's industrial troubles, I have thought of those young men!)

There are plenty of policemen in Autostroy: one in every shed, in fact, with a revolver in his holster. The general effect of these armed comrades is daunting to a British visitor: he cannot feel that such a factory is a workers' paradise; and he remembers, moreover, that here in the apotheosis of the Socialist State there is piece-work and speeding-up carried to limits which no capitalist employer could possibly adopt where labour is free. Alexei Stakhanov, the thirty-year-old miner from the Urals, has become a hero for his "Socialist emulation" by working fifteen times the normal pace!

* * * * *

One day I visited a Maternal Welfare Centre. In the first consulting room I entered I noticed a stain of fresh blood on the table, a rag in a corner, and a leaking tap. In the corridor I encountered an expectant mother, with

a beaker of urine in her hand, uncovered. She was wandering about, trying to discover where the analyst worked. Yet I had been asked to put on a white coat, lest I should bring impurities to those spotless precincts!

At an official luncheon, part of which was served on the late Czar's gold plate, I sat next to a novelist who shall be nameless.

He said, wittily, I thought: "Whatever happens, Communism will benefit the world. If the system succeeds here, you will be able to adopt it without the necessity for the unpleasantness which we have had to show towards the possessing classes. On the other hand"—here he lowered his voice—"if we fail, you will be warned by us in time."

I asked my friend his name. As I was not able to spell it, I suggested that he should write it down, and produced a pencil and notebook. He refused, turning white with fright. "If your notes are seen by the Secret Police," he explained, "as they probably will be, and my name was discovered, I should be shot."

What nonsense, I thought! To-day I am wiser. The incident made me uncomfortable, and I was still more uncomfortable when from this luncheon, replete with caviare, and sturgeon, and champagne, and expensive fruits, I went to the Sukharevsky market, where the Government then allowed the small farmer and trader to sell their wares. The contrast between these semi-starved people and my own condition was shocking.

To calculate the cost of living in Russia is not easy, for the rouble has a varying purchasing power in open shops, co-operatives, and so on. (In London or Paris it is worth 1½d. to-day, if buyers can be found.) The only sound comparison possible is to translate goods into hours of labour. According to recent Soviet statistics the average wage of a Russian worker is 225 roubles a month (the

real average is said to be 180 roubles a month). Moscow prices at present are :

Rye bread: 1 rouble a kilo ($2\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.)—more than an hour's work; that is, three times the cost of bread to an Englishman earning £3 10s. a week.

Carrots: 1 rouble 60 kopeks a kilo.

Potatoes: 1 rouble 75 kopeks a kilo—say, two hours' work.

Meat: 10 to 12 roubles a kilo—say, one and a half days' work.

Butter: 18 roubles a kilo—nearly three days' work.

A shirt: 50 roubles—nearly a week's work, i.e., £3 10s. to an Englishman.

A pair of boots: 250 roubles—more than a month's work, say, £15.

A cotton dress: 300 roubles.

A suit of inferior quality: 300 roubles, of better quality 500 roubles.

An overcoat: 600 roubles—say, £35.

Clerical workers are better paid, and often earn 600 roubles a month, while a successful actor or a popular author (who are on dizzy but dangerous heights) may receive 1,000 or even 10,000 roubles a month. Even so, there is little that money can buy. Certainly not security. Security no one has in Soviet Russia.

I lunched with M. and Mme. Sokolnikov in Moscow. He had been Ambassador in London, and was reported to have the best financial brain amongst the Bolsheviks: a nervous, weary-eyed little man, I found him, with a very pleasant voice. His wife spoke so bitterly of England that she startled me: an incalculable creature, I thought, and so she turned out to be, betraying her husband when she herself fell into the clutches of the G.P.U. (But perhaps I do her an injustice: people cannot be blamed for what they say in the Loubianka.)

In Geneva I also met Lunacharsky, full of bonhomie and guile: a gay little man, but with less real capacity than Sokolnikov. I also met Karl Radek, the clever leader-writer on *Pravda*, and took an instant dislike to him.

When his day of reckoning came, he was described, in his own newspaper, as "that obscene serpent, who smiles only to reveal his poisoned fangs."

De mortuis is a good motto for normal times, but we cannot understand what is happening in Russia to-day without considering what manner of men have been in charge of her destinies.

There is no doubt at all that sabotage and wrecking on a large scale has been in progress for years, and is even now continuing. All the old Bolsheviks, beginning with Marx, abused the hospitality of every land that gave them refuge. They were always ready to sell their country, or any other, in order to promote world revolution.

Marx, when living in England, said that any revolution that did not spread to England was a storm in a teacup. Lenin, in Russia, preached to the Russian peasants and soldiers during the Great War that they had to work for the defeat of their country; and he continued to say the same under the Socialist Government of Kerensky. (No question then of a Popular Front!) Trotsky signed away large parts of his native land under the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. Tukachevsky, the late Chief of the Soviet General Staff, when he was prisoner of war in Germany, gave his word of honour not to escape, and promptly did so, to join Lenin. It is not surprising that such men should have continued the principles of the Early Marxist Fathers under the reign of Stalin.

What of the future? According to M. Jean Fontenoy,* a young French journalist who speaks Russian like a Russian, a state of civil war exists along the whole Soviet frontier from the Baltic to the Black Sea: a war between peasants and workers trying to escape from the U.S.S.R., and G.P.U. troops who shoot them down. Whole tribes

* *Frontière Rouge—Frontière d'Enfer*, by Jean Fontenoy. Editions Populaires Françaises, Paris, 1938. See also p. 181.

have been moved from Bessarabia to Siberia. Opposite Poland 400,000 villagers have been deported. The total of those removed from the frontier regions is about a million. A belt forty miles wide and 1,800 miles long, from the north Finnish border to where Poland meets Roumania, is a military zone of barbed wire, forts, and special troops. Very few outsiders can penetrate to the villages, but those who do, like M. Fontenoy, bring back terrible stories of hunger and oppression.

A few years ago it was the fashion to say that Stalin was trying to bring Russia back into the comity of capitalist nations. It was pointed out that anyone in Moscow who dared to advocate the original doctrines of Marx would be shot. Lenin's works have been expurgated. Even Stalin's own early books are withdrawn from circulation. Private property is re-established by law in the Soviet Union, and an elaborate façade of democracy has been set up in the new Constitution. Divorce is again discouraged, and abortion is forbidden. Once more children are commanded to honour their father and their mother, instead of spying on them, as Lenin taught. It would seem, on the surface, that the old ideas are in the discard.

But has Stalin changed his skin? I do not believe it for a moment; and, what is more important, the neighbours of Russia do not believe it either. Stalin is well aware that he has no chance of influencing the Poles, Roumanians, or the Baltic States, but he hopes to be able to undermine the more distant democracies from within, by adopting their formulæ and methods. At heart, however, he remains a Marxian materialist, the faithful follower of Lenin.

No Communist, past or present, can depart very far from the early doctrine in theory, whatever he may do in practice. Russians are theoreticians, chess-players,

dreamers, dramatists, and a system which involves grandiose graphs and night-long discussions of a philosophic attitude suits their temper admirably. The U.S.S.R. is a paradise for planners. Even if only a mouse of achievement comes out of a mountain of discussion, they are content, provided that the mountain satisfies their sense of theatre. In no other country could a Kaganovitch write: "The workers judge the Soviets *not only* by their general political policy, *but also* by the practical results of their work."

A people that produced Tolstoy, Turgeniev, Chekov, Pushkin, Lermontov, Dostoievsky in letters, Rimski-Korsakov and Tchaikovsky in music, and scientists such as Mendeliev, Metchnikov, Petrov, and Pavlov, is certainly fit for a high destiny. But Communism has found the weak joint in the psychological armour of the Slav: its tendency to prefer abstractions to actualities.

For those who can afford a mind, such as governors of districts, managers of factories, presidents of collective farms, and other bureaucratic chiefs, the U.S.S.R. provides glorious opportunities: no wonder they remain, like hypnotized hens, with beaks on the "party line." But the workers are suffering under a social pressure unknown in countries where the Machine has not taken the place of God; so the machine is sabotaged, and industry is running down.

No one can say exactly what will happen when the collapse occurs, nor when it will occur. In the Ukraine, the richest province of Russia, there are 35,000,000 people, of whom an unknown number are anxious to form an independent Republic with the 10,000,000 Ukrainians outside their borders. This possible secession would loom large in Europe if the Bolshevik régime began to crumble, but not before, for an independent Ukraine has never existed, except with German support from 1917 to 1919.

Other nationalities that might break away are the Georgians, the Tatars, the Uzbeks; and there are rumours of secession in Siberia. On the other hand, the Slav Idea is a powerful reality, not only in Russia, but also in Bohemia, Moravia, Jugoslavia, Bulgaria, and amongst the millions of refugees abroad. Most of the refugees would prefer to continue in exile and poverty rather than see their country broken into fragments.

According to Stalin's recent speech (March 10th, 1939) there is to be no slackening whatever in the activities of the G.P.U., for the Soviet State is still surrounded by the spies of hostile nations, who "endeavour to take advantage of the people's weaknesses, vanity, slackness." As long as these bourgeois enemies exist, the U.S.S.R. can never relax its vigilance. Foreign observers, he said, had asserted that "the purging of the Soviet organizations of spies, assassins, and wreckers like Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Yakir, Tukachevsky, Rosengoltz, Bukharin, and other fiends, had shaken the Soviet system and caused its demoralization. One can only laugh at such cheap drivel. . . .

"Who needs this handful of people who did not understand that the humblest Soviet citizen, being free from the fetters of capital, stands head and shoulders above any foreign big-wig, whose neck wears the yoke of capitalist slavery? Of what value can this miserable band of foreign slaves be to our people?

"In 1937 Tukachevsky, Yakir, Uborevitch, and other fiends were sentenced to be shot. After that, the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. were held, and 98.6 per cent. of the total vote cast was for the Soviet power. At the beginning of 1938, Rosengoltz, Rykov, Bukharin, and other fiends were sentenced to be shot. After that, the elections to the Supreme Soviets of the Republics of the Union were held, and 99.4 per cent. of the total vote was cast for the Soviet power. To listen to these foreign

drivellers, one would think that if these spies, murderers, and wreckers had been left at liberty, the Soviet organizations would have been far sounder and stronger. (*Laughter.*)

"We have no right to expect the classical Marxist writers," he continued, "separated as they are from our day by a period of 45 or 55 years to have foreseen each and every zigzag of history in the distant future." Lenin was to have written a book on the future of Communism (Comrade Stalin naturally did not allude to his last post-script on Party members) when death cut short his task. "But what Lenin did not manage to do should be done by his disciples. (*Stormy applause.*)"*

The U.S.S.R. has "smashed the enemies of the people," and "purged itself of degenerates." It has established an entirely new Socialist State, without precedent in history. "But development cannot stop there. We are going ahead towards Communism." Here Comrade Stalin grew a little vague. "Naturally, the forms of our State will change in conformity with the change in the situation at home and abroad." There could be no permanence, he told his audience, unless "the capitalist encirclement is liquidated, and a Socialist encirclement takes its place."

One thing is certain: no massacres, no savagery will ever turn the soul of the Slav towards materialism. Already there are signs of a religious revival. As to Stalin, his policy is simple enough. If he can induce the nations of Europe to fight, then (and then only) Communism may have a chance to live amongst the ruins of our civilization. Meanwhile he remains, as he began,† the friend of all the friends of Anti-Christ.

* *Moscow News*, March 16th, 1939.

† See Appendix I.

CHAPTER III

THE LAND OF THE CÆSARS

IN Romagna, the province in which Signor Mussolini was born, one feels, as one does in Tuscany, the richness of the land which bears such abundant fruits, and has given the world so many saints and scoundrels. One expects to meet a *condottiere* or a poet round every corner, and one understands why a glory of great men have come out of Italy down the centuries. Since the days of Dante, she has produced a world-genius in almost every generation; and now, through Mussolini, himself so clearly a Roman in shape and soul, she may again have set her course upon the steep and difficult path of Empire. Such thoughts come naturally to the traveller to Predappio.

The old village, crowned by a castle, is mellow and mediæval, but New Predappio, or Dovia, four miles away, where the Duce was born, is very new indeed, and ugly by comparison with its surroundings. The birthplace of the maker of modern Italy is a little house of stone and plaster, half of which is still occupied by the son of the peasant who shared it with Signor Mussolini's father and mother.

At the time of my visit a pompous flight of brick steps led up to this humble abode. I was a little disappointed: Italians have a sense of fitness in these matters: I could not imagine that Mussolini would care to be presanctified. The caretaker seemed to read my thoughts: "The Duce," he explained, "has given orders to have that staircase taken down." Then he added with a laugh: "He isn't a saint yet, and doesn't want a shrine!"

In the ground-floor front room, Signora Mussolini taught the village children. Upstairs she gave birth to

Benito, to Arnaldo, and to Edvige, in a narrow iron bedstead, on a mattress stuffed with maize-straw, such as is used to put round Chianti bottles. The family were very poor, and rarely tasted meat or coffee. When Benito grew up he slept with Arnaldo in the single bed next his mother's room. In the village you may still see the two silo towers he built when he was a boy. A cousin of his still keeps a haberdasher's shop in the main street, opposite the inn where I lunched.

Mussolini's youth has been described by himself and many others;* we may take up his story at the beginning of the Great War, when he was 31, editor of *Avanti!* and on the threshold of a brilliant career.

Italian Socialists were generally against participation in the War, and Mussolini could not immediately run counter to the wishes of his Party. But he chafed under a policy of abstention, growing more and more restive as the weeks passed, until in October, 1915, he took one of the major decisions of his life, and resigned from his editorship.

His comrades summoned him to a meeting of the Party in Milan, where he was hooted when he appeared on the platform. "Neutrals can never hope to dominate events," he said. "They will always be dominated by them. The creaking wheels of history have to be oiled with blood." This sentiment was greeted with hisses and whistles. In the excitement Mussolini broke a glass of water on the speakers' table. Spreading his bleeding hands to the audience, he cried: "You are going to try to banish me from the streets and piazzas of Italy! Well, I wager that I will continue to speak in the streets and piazzas, and that the masses will follow me, and that when there is no one left to listen to you I shall still be speaking there!"

His self-confidence infuriated the majority of Socialists,

* See Appendix II.

but impressed a few. He became known to a wider circle. Men of like mind gathered to his cause, including the famous D'Annunzio. Soon afterwards he started a newspaper of his own, the *Popolo d'Italia*.

Italy entered the Great War on the side of the Allies on May 24th, 1915. Mussolini rejoined the 11th Regiment of Bersaglieri in August, and spent the first winter of his active service on the Isonzo front. Later his regiment was moved to the Carso, where he was promoted a corporal, and mentioned in battalion orders as "ever first in operations of courage and audacity."

Under the date of April 7th, 1916, we find the following comments on soldiers in Mussolini's *Diary of the War*:

"Morale is an imponderable not to be measured, but it is the coefficient of victory, pre-eminent over technical and mechanical equipment. He will conquer who has the greatest reserve of psychic energy. A hundred thousand guns will not give victory if soldiers will not move to the assault.

"A company has a war-establishment of about 250 men: from the point of view of morale these can be divided as follows:

"Some 25 are men of heroic mould who know the reasons why we are fighting, and fight with enthusiasm.

"Another 25 have returned voluntarily from foreign countries. These men are also first-class soldiers in every way.

"About 50 men—chiefly young—fight for the pleasure of it.

"The main part of the company—say, 100 men—accepts the fact of war without discussing it. These men would willingly have stayed at home, but now that they are fighting they know how to do their duty.

"About 40 men in every company are brave or cowardly according to circumstances.

"The remainder (say, 10 men) is composed of refractory or conscienceless individuals: a residue that has not always the courage to reveal itself as the scum it is for fear of punishment.

"The figures may vary, but on the whole the proportion is constant. This is not the time to speak of what has been

done to improve the morale of the Italian soldier, and of what has not been done; but one day we shall speak of this also."

A cold, clear appraisal. . . . Mussolini was determined to see things as they are, and he already had plans for changing them. To-day he has raised both the moral and the physical stature of his people; and the latter, which can be measured, has increased by nearly half an inch in the last ten years.

On February 23rd, 1917, he was badly wounded by the premature bursting of a bomb in a trench-mortar. Four of his companions were killed. Mussolini received forty wounds from steel splinters, which subsequently required twenty-seven operations for their extraction. For a month he lay in an emergency hospital at Ronchi, at the foot of the Carso (whence D'Annunzio was to start, two years later, for his Fiume adventure), too weak and feverish to be moved; then he was transferred to the base; and by August he had recovered sufficiently to be discharged. He was still a semi-invalid when the Caporetto retreat sent a shock of horror and alarm through Italy. Those nearest him during these days speak of his agony of spirit. He dragged himself back to his desk at the *Popolo d'Italia*, and lived only in the destinies of his country. With the turn of the tide of war he recovered his health.

Patriotic Socialists were fighting for their country (Corridoni and Battisti were killed), but very few Members of Parliament had reached the trenches; and only one was killed in action, Count Brandolini of Venice. Politicians were excessively unpopular in Italy during the Great War, and one had the impression, talking to soldiers returning from the front, that not only the *pescecani* (war profiteers) but the whole Parliamentary system would be brought to judgment at the first opportunity.

Liberal Democracy had fallen on evil days in Italy since Mazzini and other exiles had first propounded its lofty principles. From 1870 to 1922 there were 32 Governments, with an average life of 18 months each. The leading politicians were not financially corrupt (and never have been, with one notorious exception during the years immediately after the Great War), but they administered a political "racket" without parallel, except perhaps in the United States. It was based on the English Parliamentary system, but each electoral district had a political boss, or "Grande Elettore," who supported one or other of the groups in Parliament in return for a fixed number of local rewards for his henchmen, such as jobs in the Revenue or Customs, or in the railways, schools, post-office, police, etc. The chosen group sent down an approved candidate, whose task, when elected, was to see that his supporters received the promised prizes. Under this system a large and useless Civil Service grew up, consisting of officials appointed for political reasons, and practically irremovable owing to the protection they received from the local magnate. During a period of 70 years only one Ministry lost a general election. When in danger of losing a seat even the most Liberal Ministers had no hesitation in resorting to acts of violence. At Citta di Castello, for instance, "the Prefect prevented the electors from reaching the polling booths by drawing up cordons of police across the roads: he kept back a howling mob of would-be voters and finally dispersed them by charging them, as if they had been rebels and enemies. It was impossible for the strongest Minister to reform even the most flagrant of such abuses, for all groups and all parties were equally guilty and equally interested."*

Under such circumstances the average Italian shunned

* *The Making of a Corporate State*, by Harold E. Goad. Christophers, 1932.

politics. He had no respect for Parliament or its deputies, and he wanted a change. This revolutionary feeling was openly expressed after the defeat of Caporetto in 1917. It was followed by the rise of Communism in 1918, and by Fascism, which was founded in 1919.

The causes of Caporetto were not any lack of courage on the part of the Italian soldier, but were due to muddle and incompetence in the rear. Before Anglo-French assistance arrived the Italians had already re-formed their ranks, and the country was grimly and silently determined to avenge disaster.

It is an error to assume that the Italian is always a talkative and excitable person. His nerves are among the best in Europe (you have only to note how he drives a car or an aeroplane), and hardly a case of shell-shock occurred in the Italian army. He will gesticulate and argue when happy, but face him with an emergency, or an insult, and a very different man appears. When he is silent the Italian can be very dangerous.

After Caporetto, Italy was wounded in her pride. She reorganized her army and fought back with fury and great success. By her victory of Vittorio Veneto, she captured the largest number of prisoners and the greatest quantity of arms and ammunition ever taken in military operations, unless one so describes the German seizure of Bohemia.

Similarly, later, during the rise of Communism, there came a period when the man-in-the-street was too angry to talk. He acted, however, swiftly, sometimes savagely, but on the whole with moderation and good sense.

* * * * *

As soon as the Cease Fire sounded in 1918 a certain war-weariness became evident in all the countries of Europe, and in none was the reaction more violent than

in Italy. Patriotism went suddenly and sharply out of fashion. There were no victory parades in Italy, but an epidemic of strikes. Decorations for a triumph in Rome were dismantled at the bidding of the Socialists. Soldiers went back to their civil jobs as if ashamed of themselves.

Socialists, Reformists, Social-Democrats, and Republicans all tended to an anti-militarist, anti-monarchical policy, and amongst them the Communists were at work to form a single front for the overthrow of society. In February, 1919, they organized a Red Day in Milan, when the Italian flag was torn down, war-veterans insulted, and a resolution passed demanding the immediate release of all imprisoned deserters. Parliament did nothing. The *Popolo d'Italia* was a lone voice, crying not exactly in the wilderness, for it then possessed an audience of 120,000, but in a welter of contending factions.

On March 23rd, 1919, Mussolini founded Fascism in a little hall, holding about a hundred people, off the Piazza San Sepolcro in Milan. The meeting was attended by the readers of the *Popolo d'Italia* from all over Italy. Other groups of patriots sprang up at Genoa, Turin, Verona, Bergamo, Pavia, Cremona, Naples, consisting of ex-officers, war-veterans, *arditi*,* peasants who hated the egalitarian doctrines of Socialism, workers who despised the dialectical theory of history (for the true Italian is a romantic, living under a mask of commercial cunning, which often stifles him) and women who wanted home and security rather than anarchy and atheism. Many of these people formed independent groups: they only coalesced gradually under Mussolini's leadership. There was little talk of

* Storm-troopers, or "black flames" (*fiamme nere*), who were formed in July, 1917, on the Isonzo front, from volunteers chosen for their audacity. They wore a black flash on the collar of their uniform. They were disbanded after the war, but reconstituted as the Blackshirt Militia under Fascism. Their battle-cry is *A Noi!* (To us—the victory!)

Fascism, except in the *Popolo d'Italia*, but for all these enthusiasts the doctrines of Parliamentary Liberalism, Socialism and Communism had passed out of the region of discussion into an arctic circle of contempt.

* * * * *

On April 10th, 1919, a general strike occurred in Rome because the authorities refused to allow a demonstration in favour of Lenin. On May 4th all the dock-labourers in Genoa came out, and 80,000 railwaymen in Liguria. In June and July there were riots in Forlì, Florence, Turin, Milan, Alessandria, Genoa, Pisa, and an abortive general strike in favour of the U.S.S.R. throughout North Italy.

Details of the Communist outrages which followed are necessarily abbreviated, and may appear a wearisome relation of events best forgotten. Alas, they are still topical, at least for France and possibly for Belgium. The reader is urged to note what happened in Italy, and what the apologists for Communism are saying to-day.

In September, 1919, the Government of Italy, under Socialist pressure, granted an amnesty to all war-deserters, giving them practically the same opportunities for civil employment as loyal veterans. In October the Italian Socialist Congress held at Bologna adopted the full creed of Bolshevism as its programme. On December 1st the Socialist Members of Parliament in Rome remained seated when the King came to open Parliament, and sang the "Red Flag" in his presence. A deserter from the front, Signor Misiano, took his seat in Parliament.

On January 13th, 1920, there was a strike of postal employees, and on the 20th a strike on the Italian State Railways, in which the permanent way was destroyed by dynamite at Milan, at Arezzo, and at Ancona. The Government took no disciplinary action; indeed, under pressure from the Socialists some men who had remained

on duty when called out by their union were actually punished. Strikers received full pay for the days they had been absent.

During this year thefts from the baggage of passengers had reached such proportions that nothing was safe out of the traveller's sight. Even when leaving a suitcase in a cloakroom it was customary to have it corded and sealed, for which the attendant expected a tip.

In February, 200,000 employees of the chemical industries came out on strike. In March the employees of the great Fiat Motor Works in Turin walked out, and the occupation of factories and farms reached considerable proportions later in the year. Workers were generally very well behaved, and they had reason to complain of their conditions, which no Government had made a serious attempt to ameliorate; but under Communist guidance both production and consumption declined, and everyone was the poorer.

In the Fiat Works the employees asked the proprietor, Signor Agnelli, to return, in order to help them in the export business, which they did not feel competent to administer. He refused, until he was given back his property. Eventually Signor Giolitti, who was then Prime Minister, induced the men to return to work, but strikes and lock-outs were still frequent, and inflicted enormous losses on both parties.

Red guards were formed in all the principal cities of Italy; they attacked soldiers in uniform, burned factories and shops, bombed the meetings of their rivals. There were many murders, and constant boycotts in Genoa, Turin, Milan, Florence, Bologna—all the provincial capitals.

In the spring of this year (1920) I was journeying from Spezia to the village of Aulla, on the line to Parma. At the first station out of Spezia the engine-driver refused

to obey the guard's signal to proceed. A swarm of Communists besieged the station-master's office. We had two officers in uniform on board; unless they got off the train, the Communists declared, it would not be allowed to start. The officers got off the train. (That year a memorandum was issued from the War Office in Rome suggesting that it would be more tactful for officers to travel in civilian clothes to avoid such incidents as this.) My companion, who was a lawyer and a man of peace, saluted the Communists with his clenched fist, but he also clenched his teeth, and there was a grim look in his eyes.

In November municipal elections resulted in Communist or Socialist wins in 2,000 out of 8,000 communes. Bologna was one of the "Red" communes. At the first meeting of the council, on November 21st, 1920, a scuffle occurred outside the Municipality, and the Socialists present fired on the crowd. Inside the council chamber they opened fire on the members—who were unarmed—and killed Captain Giulio Giordani, a war veteran with one leg, who had been decorated for valour, and wounded two other councillors.

For some months the Fascists had been growing in strength; now, largely owing to the cowardly murder of Giordani, their numbers began to swell from hour to hour. The man-in-the-street no longer discussed Communism. He was either its enemy, or himself a Communist.

Already in the summer of 1919 the Fascists had begun to break strikes and to attack the Communists, who were terrorizing the cities and countryside. In October of that year a Fascist Congress had been held in Florence, in which 45,000 members were represented. By now—November, 1920—they had trebled in numbers, and public opinion was largely on their side. Communist leaders began to ask for protection from the police, many of whose comrades had been murdered by their followers.

Another murder which sent a thrill of horror through Italy was committed by the Communists in Florence on February 27th, 1921. A boy of fifteen, Giovanni Berta, whose only crime was that he was the son of a manufacturer, was knocked off his bicycle and pursued by Red Guards. He bolted across the iron bridge over the Arno. When half-way across he tried to escape detection by climbing over the parapet and hanging on to it by his hands, but the Communists saw him: they cut off his fingers, and he fell into the river and was drowned.

A year later, at the siege of Parma, Italo Balbo heard a Communist singing behind the barricades:

"Hanno ammazato Berta,
Figlio di pescecani:
Evviva il comunista
Che li spezzò le mani!"

"They've killed Berta,
Brat of a big toff:
Here's to the bloke
Who chopped his fingers off!"

Several other murders were committed by the Red Guards on the same day that Berta was murdered. The people of Florence rose against them, and in the rioting which followed twenty men were killed and 100 wounded. By the light of burning clubs and co-operatives many Socialists, doubtless some of them innocent, paid for the misdeeds of their Communist allies.

On March 23rd a bomb was thrown by Communists into the middle of the audience of the Diana Theatre at Milan, killing twenty people and wounding 200, many of whom were women and children. At the funeral of the victims, Mussolini and his Fascists were cheered throughout the city, especially in the poor quarters. All over Italy the popularity as well as the numbers of the Fascists grew.

On May 15th, 1921, general elections were held, and Signor Mussolini, who had secured only 5,000 votes in Milan in 1919, was returned by large majorities in three constituencies, of which he chose Milan. In his first speech to the Chamber, on June 21st, he surprised the deputies, who thought that he was only some new kind of agitator, with a closely reasoned and scarifying review of the Government's foreign policy. Of Communism he said:

"We deny the existence of two classes, because there are many more than two classes in society. We deny that human history can be explained in terms of economics. We affirm that the true story of capitalism is now beginning, because capitalism is not a system of oppression only, but also a selection of values, a co-ordination of hierarchies, a more amply developed sense of individual responsibilities."

* * * * *

By 1921 the Black Shirts had won their way to the heart of the masses and had made a deep impression on the middle classes. They were young, idealistic, flexible in their methods; they had no ponderous Marxian theory to impose; their purpose was to see that order was preserved, that citizens could go about their business unmolested, and that the Crucifix and the Italian flag were not insulted. In short, that life *went on*.

Under Socialist-Communist administration life had been coming to a standstill. The Posts and Telegraphs functioned so badly that a telegram sometimes took a week to get from one part of Italy to another. Streets were rarely swept, municipal employees swarmed in every office, doing little but increase the rates. The railways were a byword for dirt, delay, and bribery. The tramways in Milan, which under a private company had earned a profit, now showed a heavy deficit.

In September, 1921, Italo Balbo, a young demobilized

ex-officer of Ferrara (he had enlisted at eighteen, and was now twenty-four) who had been organizing the Fascist militia in his province, was ordered by Mussolini to make a demonstration march on Ravenna. The men collected by groups and formed two columns, each 1,500 strong, from Ferrara and Bologna respectively, and marched towards Ravenna in military formation, with scouts out and bands playing. At Lugo he was joined by Signor Dino Grandi (now Ambassador in London), and together the lads led their cohorts to the tomb of Dante.

For the first time, Balbo tells us in his *Diary*,* he realized the possibilities of the future. Fascism had an army.

The men, in their black shirts (the usual dress of a labourer in the Romagna†), had been assembled, paraded, billeted, fed, dispersed without a hitch. This was Italy's answer to the cry, "Christ is dead, but Lenin lives!" It was an army of boys, inspired with the generous idealism—and occasionally with the cruelty—of youth.

"Our militia," its secret orders ran, "is at the service of God and our Italian country. Every soldier must serve Italy with purity, pervaded by a profound mysticism, as disdainful of opportunism and prudence as he is of cowardice. The Fascist soldier knows only duty. He has no rights, save that of being allowed to perform his duty. Honour is to him what it was to the *condottieri*, a law which strives to reach but never reaches the apex of perfection.

"The chiefs, military as well as political, have on their shoulders the greatest responsibility. Whoever to-day desires to build up a new hierarchy must be a master of sacrifice even before he is a master of passion and of arms."

It is true that the Black Shirts sometimes fell short of their ideals. There were burnings and floggings which

* *Diario, 1922*, by Italo Balbo. Mondadori, Milan, 1937. It is a pity that this vivid document has not been translated into English.

† Other authorities hold that the Fascist shirt was derived from the uniform of the Arditi.

were authorized, as retribution for crimes which had gone unpunished by a supine Government, but there were also some personal reprisals. These were sternly punished, however. Not so the administration of castor oil to hostile demagogues and the occasional shaving of a Communist skull, which was then painted with the colours of the Italian flag. Force was met with force, but the Italian revolution was very different from the Russian, and there were instances of chivalry on both sides. After the March on Rome, Mussolini's 100,000 men dispersed quietly to their homes. There were no reprisals.

Events moved swiftly and—as we see them now—invariably to their crisis during 1922. Anti-Fascist writers make play of the fact that Communism had already been rejected by the people of Italy before the March on Rome. It is true that the people were tired of disorder and disgusted by Red methods long before Mussolini came to power, but there is not a shadow of proof that any other Government could have given expression to their desire for security. Ministers had been either too cowardly to intervene or had hoped that Fascists and Communists would exterminate each other, like the Kilkenny cats. So little had Bolshevism been “liquidated” by the summer of 1922 that on July 31st of that year the Alliance of Labour (which represented practically all Left-Wing organizations in Italy) declared a general strike, hoping that in the subsequent rioting the Government would be forced to suppress the Fascists.

But the Communist hopes of disorder were disappointed. Many districts were already in the hands of the Black Shirts. Mussolini sent an ultimatum to Signor Facta's Government: either the forces of the Crown would see that trains ran, food reached the people, and shops remained open, or else, within forty-eight

hours, the Fascists would provide for these services themselves. The Government did nothing, so the Fascists took charge, and in less than a week the general strike was over.

Most people now looked on Mussolini as the coming man. In Rome there was a general collapse of authority. Signor Giolitti, nearing eighty, and taking a cure at Vichy, was sent for by the King. He promised to return in the autumn. Meanwhile the Budget deficit was £100,000,000.

Plans for the march on Rome were made in the greatest secrecy. A quadrumvirate—Balbo, De Bono, Bianchi, and De Vecchi—was to command the Fascist militia of 400,000 Black Shirts, which would arrive in the neighbourhood of Rome by three columns. A fourth column would march from the south. General headquarters were at Perugia. Grandi was to be in charge of the political negotiations in Rome. Mussolini remained at his desk in Milan, with the threads of the revolution in his hands. It is said that if a retreat had been necessary, in face of an army mobilization, he would have formed a Provisional Government in North Italy.

In Rome twenty-five groups of ten selected Fascists were to occupy the most important centres of the Government, in case of serious disturbance. They never came into action, but the existence of these 250 storm-troopers (kept a profound secret at the time, and indeed until recently) shows with what care Mussolini had prepared for every eventuality.

On the night of October 26th-27th the Fascists mobilized. Certain groups occupied strategic points, others marched to their rendezvous surrounding Rome. Most of the railwaymen had already become Fascists, so communications were easy. Signor Facta consulted the Chief of the General Staff, General Badoglio, who said that the Fascists could certainly be dispersed by force, but

only if martial law were declared. Facta sent out the decree proclaiming martial law to the prefects, and issued it to the Press before submitting it to the King. But the King refused to sign it, knowing that it would lead to civil war. Facta resigned. Salandra tried to form a Cabinet, but failed. Thereupon the King turned to Mussolini.

On the morning of October 30th, 1922, Mussolini arrived in the capital and presented himself at the Quirinal in his black shirt. For five hours his men marched past the King. Immediately afterwards they were ordered to return home. Disappointment was keen amongst many Fascists who had never seen the Eternal City, but discipline was preserved, and the march on Rome cost nothing to the Italian Exchequer, for all expenses were paid privately, or out of party funds.

Mussolini convened Parliament immediately. "*From now on,*" he said, "*the watchwords of Italy will be economy, work, discipline. I might have made this dreary hall a bivouac for my platoons. Instead, I have summoned you to give me a vote of confidence.*" Amazed, and only a little disconcerted by the tone of the new Prime Minister, Parliament gave him 306 votes, against 116, with 7 abstentions. The vote of the Senate was almost unanimous in favour of Mussolini. So began Year 1 of the Fascist Era.

* * * * *

During my first interview with Mussolini, in 1928, he told me that Europe was entering upon a ten-year period of crisis. To the Senate, in June of that year, he said: "Between 1935 and 1940 Europe will find itself at a very delicate period of its history, a period of new and important changes. Problems will arise which I dearly hope may be solved pacifically; but grave complications would be avoided if the Peace Treaties could be revised." These

words have been in print a long time. I remember that I thought his prediction too disturbing for the readers of *The Spectator*.

Mussolini displayed none of the mannerisms I had expected. He had scowled and snapped at my editor a year previously, making him walk the length of his big room in surly silence; but he met me at the door, took my arm, said we were brother journalists (an old gag, I thought!) and that he had a great admiration for England. Amongst his best friends in Rome at this time were Sir Ronald and Lady Sybil Graham. He was teaching himself English: he had learned to say groups of words together, instead of carefully enunciating each, as most foreigners do. To-day he speaks well, although naturally with an accent.

Since he came to power, Mussolini has found time (a) to learn English, (b) to learn to fly and navigate an aeroplane, (c) to learn to ride; and this in addition to formulating a philosophy, writing constant articles, and governing Italy. When I asked him whether he did not find himself overburdened with six Ministries, he replied, "It's really simpler to give orders myself, instead of having to send for the Minister concerned and convince him about what I want done."

His energy is amazing, but it is not really exceptional for an Italian. Italians run to extremes in vitality. Either they are *lazzaroni*, sitting about all day in the sun and doing nothing (such people are by no means confined to Naples), or they are human volcanoes. An inn-keeper friend of mine is up at 6 a.m. (I used to meet him then, sweeping out the bar) and is never in bed before midnight. His family consists of his wife, his son Nino, aged eleven, and four daughters. He and his wife, with Nino and three daughters (Maria-Lucia is too young to work), look after ten or twelve bedrooms, serve about fifty luncheons

and dinners, and refreshments throughout the day and night, in addition to milking and feeding two cows in the basement. Cooking is done by a cousin and his wife, who have a young baby, convalescent from whooping cough. Only on festivals, when there is a great influx of visitors, does a hired waiter appear for the day. Otherwise the inn is a family business. At ten o'clock at night I have often seen Nino and Carla (aged ten) leaning against the tap-room wall, white as sheets, with black rings under their eyes, wilting with exhaustion. They are sent to bed then, but Eva and Irma stay with their father until midnight. But my friend is not the least cruel to his children: he adores them and they are as happy as can be: they think it perfectly natural that man—and woman—must live by brow's sweat. Their customers, the peasants, win an even more arduous living from the soil.

Occasionally, in the afternoon, when I am thinking of a siesta, I see Nino playing with Maria-Lucia. He has made a swing for her, but chiefly they scream and scamper about. They have no toys: they make their own amusements, and I think they are the happier for it. They take turns dandling the cook's baby, and stuffing it with sweets. . . . Incidentally, there are no perambulators in the country districts: in my infancy I was always carried on a cushion on my brawny nurse's arm.

There must be a million or more of mute inglorious Mussolinis in Italy, ambitious, tireless people, living on next to nothing, and working prodigiously at their trade, and at various hobbies also. These people have two sides to their nature: they are as hard as nails where their business is concerned, but their heart is in their home.

This is true of Mussolini himself, whose brow of a dreamer and jaw of a "go-getter" reveals the characteristic dual strands. "The Duce is a family man: he detests going out at night, and his real ambition is to play with

his children." This is the observation not of some sycophantic Fascist, but of an eminent Englishman with expert knowledge of Italy. It is perhaps an exaggeration, but full of truth.

Mussolini is a genius, a man such as appears but rarely in the centuries, but he is also a typical Italian peasant. Such men spare neither themselves nor others when the corn is to be reaped, or the vintage pressed. See the terraces cut out of the hillsides (half the soil of Italy is rocky or barren) by the labour of long generations who have loved and guarded every foot of soil. Watch a boy carrying two hundredweight of grass along a mountain path: you would think he would eat like a prize-fighter to have the strength to bear such a burden, but in fact he lives on maize, and olives, and even a cup of coffee is a luxury. Go on a pilgrimage with peasants: you will find that they walk twenty miles or more, with their women and children, and, having heard Mass shortly after midnight, they will sit up until dawn on the moonlit piazza, singing praises to the Queen of Heaven. Sometimes it rains on these occasions: then they laugh, and shiver, and sing the louder.

A thing which impressed me greatly about Mussolini I must set down here, although I know that it will be strenuously disputed. Mussolini has a large streak of human kindness in his complex character.

Probably no great leader of men is without kindness: people do not give their lives except for love. Mussolini loves people: his face and eyes can assume a very gentle expression, never seen in his photographs, which always represent him—sometimes comically, to an Anglo-Saxon mind—as a synthesis of warrior virtues. The real Mussolini is far too complex, far too Italian, to be only a soldier. He is full of pugnacity, but also full of curiosity, malice, wit, and affection. By virtue of his congenital mental

resilience he understands us better than we can understand him. Similarly, because we were influenced for three hundred years by Rome, we are more flexible and quicker in the uptake than the Germans. As a builder of a bridge of good-will between the Great Powers, the Duce may yet play a great rôle.

I have written that he has a kind side to his character (not disclosed when he finished the war in Abyssinia with mustard gas, or when he invaded Albania on Good Friday: still, few great men and no Great Power can stand guiltless at the bar of history), and I believe that his bellicose utterances, on occasion, are designed to bolster-up an aggressiveness which is not an Italian characteristic, but which he considers is necessary to his nation in present circumstances. The sudden attack on Albania—about which I find it difficult to write calmly—was designed to prove to the world that Italy is in deadly earnest about her claims against France in Tunis and Jibouti. I do not believe that it was meant to force our hand, or to provoke war. But war will be inevitable if we do not answer in a language Mussolini understands: by action, not protests: by armed strength, combined with a readiness to negotiate with regard to the French-Italian quarrel.

Mussolini is not a man of peace. His views, plainly stated, are that perpetual peace is an impossibility. But he is not looking for a war with us. During the height of the Abyssinian crisis an Italian friend of mine described to me very vividly a war conference in Rome, under the presidency of the Duce, in which a certain official pointed out that the British fleet at Alexandria was seriously short of ammunition (we had, in fact, only ten rounds for our big guns at the time) and that a series of air raids by the famous "Death Squadron" might send half our ships to the bottom. Mussolini seemed to agree with this suggestion, which horrified my friend; but when the Duce

spoke, all he said was: "We might attack England. But we will not. We needn't discuss it, even. That subject is closed, gentlemen, unless I reopen it myself at some future time."

Too much importance need not be attached to such reports; nevertheless I am sure that Mussolini is sincere in his desire to be friends with England. With France also, provided he can obtain a favourable settlement of the present dispute (I deal with it below) because he has no delusions about the fighting qualities of the French, when defending their own possessions.

Moreover, the Duce knows full well, although he never admits it in his speeches, that "to live for a day like a lion" is not a sensible man's ambition. Italians are not disposed to allow heroics to interfere with business. They are ambitious, yes, and brave when need be; but they dislike the idea of playing second fiddle to Germany in an adventure in world conquest. Their position is too dangerous. To the French and ourselves the Mediterranean is only an important highway (*via*), but for Italy it is *vita*, life. Italy will hesitate to stake her existence on a gamble in which Germany would reap most of the profits.

* * * * *

Mussolini is not in the least like the excitable demagogue or the swaggering dictator which the British public imagines him to be. To impress an audience of orators, such as the Italians are, large gestures and vivid phrasing are necessary. No one but an Italian, speaking to Italians, would hold up an ear of wheat and say: "*This is not only bread, but bayonets!*" There are bayonets in most of the Duce's speeches,* but in private he is calm, and gesticulates very little.

* Also epigrams, and a note of sardonic humour. In one of them, relating to rearmament, he said that big guns were "*belle*

At the end of my interview, after more than an hour's talk, he passed suddenly to drama. He had just been telling me that he made mistakes. "Everybody makes mistakes," he said, "but I don't lose confidence in myself or in others for that reason. I am like a surgeon. If I showed doubt, what would the world think? Italy is my patient. When an operation has to be performed, the surgeon doesn't ask the patient what he is to do. He is paid to know. I know, and, when necessary, I cut swiftly and deep!"

So saying, he sprang up, eyes flashing, strong hands tense, chloroformed an imaginary patient, seized a paper knife, carved up the ghost.

Then he sat down, his strong hands motionless on the arms of his chair. (Very few Italians keep their fingers still when talking.) "In view of the importance of what you write," he said to me gravely (and it only occurred to me afterwards that what he meant was "in case you make a fool of yourself"), "I would like to see a copy of your article."

I sent it to him at 7 p.m. It was returned within an hour, with the deletion of a paragraph in praise of Mr. Winston Churchill, whom I had made him say was "a

cose." This was translated as "Big guns are also beautiful things." But "belle cose" is an obvious pun, and has two other idiomatic meanings: one is "good wishes." In a discourse on economics he said that planners would like all babies to be born the same length, so that cradles could be standardized. Of Socialism he said, "It is no longer a doctrine, but a grudge." When facing an angry Parliament at the time of the Matteotti murder in 1924 (Matteotti was a prominent young Socialist deputy, killed by Fascists, some of whom were in the confidence of the Duce: the affair shook the régime and led to the dictatorship) Mussolini cried: "What butterflies are we chasing under the Arch of Titus? If Fascism has been only castor oil and a club, and not the proud passion of Italian youth, then the blame is on me!"

very great man," but otherwise unaltered; and a signed photograph.

* * * * *

Although there is nothing surprising in the long hours Mussolini keeps, his physical fitness is exceptional for a man of 55. This is largely due to a diet of Spartan simplicity, begun when he developed a gastric ulcer, soon after the March on Rome, when he lived entirely on milk for six months. He is now practically a vegetarian, and neither smokes nor drinks wine. It is said that he thinks that the Italians eat too much starch. At a recent meeting of the Fascist Grand Council, which begins at 10 p.m. and often lasts far into the night, he shouted to one of his oldest followers, who had nodded off to sleep: "Look at him! He is stupefied with spaghetti!"

He rises at 6.30, goes for a ride, breakfasts on fruit and milk while reading the morning papers, then drives to his enormous room in the Palazzo Venezia, where he sees his principal private secretary, the Party Secretary, and the Chief of Police. The remainder of the morning is passed in interviews: he sees the Foreign Minister and the Minister for Popular Culture daily, and other heads of Ministries as required. He leaves at one o'clock for luncheon, his main meal, which consists usually of soup and vegetables, with a very little coarse bread. In the summer he swims before luncheon at Ostia, where he has a hut, and has a nap until 3.30 p.m. In the winter he is frequently back at work by 1.30. (At other times he has a fencing lesson at this time, or plays the violin.) In the evening he has a one-course meal: either fruit, or soup, or bread and milk. On Tuesdays and Saturdays he sees a film in his private cinema in the Villa Torlonia; and he is generally in bed by 10 p.m., though sometimes he works far into the night. He very rarely dines in

public. Even when staying with friends he generally avoids meeting them in the evening, and has a bowl of hot milk and a piece of country bread brought to his bedroom.

Recently there have been stories in England that he is ageing, and that he is becoming more and more of a recluse. These are nonsense. He was never in better health: he radiates vitality, and few men of his age are as active. The only reason he sees fewer foreign interviewers is that he knows they can no longer serve his purpose.

In Italy the Duce's doings are chronicled daily, and in somewhat tedious fashion, to English eyes. But we must never forget (as we generally do!) that passions are more vehement and loyalties less steady under southern than under northern skies. This has nothing to do with Mussolini: it is a fact of nature. Although he is loved—there is no question of that—by the vast majority of Italians, there always has been, is now, and always will be a dangerous minority, in all Mediterranean countries, ready to achieve its ends by violence. It is something in the blood, for Italians are ready enough to transfer their feuds to Chicago. Subtle as the Italians are in some respects, they do not understand understatement in the Anglo-Saxon manner. If a man is a dictator, he must behave like one. The "upper-classes" may smile, but Mussolini is a man of the people, and he knows what the masses want. As long as he governs Italy the limelight must fall on him.

The King of Italy is not neglected, as anti-Fascists often assert. Far from it, the House of Savoy has never been so powerful as it is in Italy to-day. Mussolini has come to love and respect the King with all the intensity of his passionate nature, and consults him on many details of administration (as well, of course, as on all foreign

policy) which in former days were wholly in the hands of the Government. The King is no longer young. He is not often seen in public, but his influence behind the scenes is enormous. There is no other constant influence on Mussolini's public life, now that Arnaldo is dead.

The Fascist hierarchy consists of:

1. The King,
2. The Head of the Government,
3. The Cabinet,
4. The Fascist Grand Council,
5. The Senate,
6. The (new) Chamber of Fasces and Corporations.

The above are organs of Government, with full legislative powers. Below them come National Corporations, National Confederations, Provincial Federations, Syndicates and Category Guilds in somewhat confusing variety, which it is unnecessary to fully classify here.

The operative unit of the Fascist economic system is the Syndicate. In every trade and in every district throughout Italy there are separate local Syndicates for employers and employed, who elect their own officials. Representation, it should be noted, is *occupational, not geographical*.

If you are a textile operative, for instance, you probably choose someone from your mill to look after your interests, and so on. Everyone who contributes to the wealth of the country by hand or by brain has a representative in the hierarchy of the Corporate State who is acquainted with his or her problems. (Women join the Syndicates on exactly the same terms as men. Five women have seats in the National Confederations. The Federation of Professional Women and Artists has a membership of 10,000.) Negotiations between capital and labour, or between rival interests, are conducted as far as possible

locally. Strikes and lock-outs are forbidden, and disputes between employers and workers come to arbitration first between representatives of the Syndicates. When a dispute occurs which cannot be settled locally, it goes to the provincial Federations—say, to Turin, Milan, Venice, etc.; and if it cannot be settled there it goes to the Confederations in Rome, and from them, if necessary, to the National Council of Corporations. Two-thirds of the disputes in industry in the last fifteen years have been settled in favour of the workers. (Soon after coming to power Mussolini said: "If the bourgeoisie expects to find in Fascism a lightning-conductor to save it from the just demands of labour, it is very much mistaken.")

It is not necessary to be a member of the Fascist Party in order to belong to the Syndicates. Every worker and every employer, however, whether a Fascist or not, must subscribe to his Syndicate a sum equivalent to one day's pay, or to one day's profit, for it represents his interests as a producer.

Amongst the functions of the Syndicates are the organization of child welfare centres, sports clubs, labour exchanges, and the administration of unemployment insurance, which they collect and disburse themselves. The workers, therefore, have direct contact with many of the problems of government which in democratic countries are left to a bureaucracy. It is probably true to say that a worker in Italy has more direct control over matters which affect him—unemployment insurance, for instance—than a worker in France or Great Britain.

Every producer, as has been said, is a member of his local Syndicate. Federations are composed of regionally and vocationally grouped Syndicates. Confederations are national bodies representing the whole mass of workers or the whole mass of employers in a particular industry. Above the Confederations are twenty-two Corporations,

representing the industries of Italy as a whole. Parallel with the Corporations are twenty-three Category Guilds, composed of equal numbers of employers and employees (to whom are added necessary experts) engaged in a given cycle of production. For instance, the Beet Guild has in it employers and workers on the farms, in beet factories, jam factories, the confectionery trade, distilleries, etc. The functions of the Category Guilds are largely technical, but they also co-ordinate the interests of producers and consumers, and both with the interests of the nation as a whole.

The new Chamber of Fasces and Corporations will not be elected, but will be composed of some 600 National Councillors taking their seats, *ex officio*, as officials of the Fascist Party or as members of the above-mentioned Confederations, Corporations, or Category Guilds.

In their hill-towns of the Renaissance the Italians gave us—amongst much else—the idea of party government (the very words are Italian), so no one can say that they have not given it a trial. The system which they are now evolving may have many disadvantages, but it cannot be called irresponsible to the will of the people. (It can be criticized, indeed, as being too responsive to certain groups and to trade interests, as distinct from the whole body of the nation.) In theory the national interest is supreme. Everyone in the Fascist hierarchy, including the King (who must look to Divine guidance), has a judge above him who decides questions from an ideal viewpoint. This is the theory, and I do not suggest that in practice Italy is more idealistic than my own country. I believe that in England our rulers still do decide major issues generally by high standards. But if we are considering an ideal government, the position of a democracy elected by mere weight of numbers is weak. If rulers acted on the immediate will of the people, based as it so

often is upon inadequate information, there would be little justice in the world.

Fortunately, rulers do not do so in practice. Everywhere—in democracies and dictatorships alike—rulers try to discover a compromise between what the people want and what it is expedient or possible to give them.

There have been two purely Fascist elections, in 1928 and 1934. On each occasion the Syndicates throughout Italy submitted a list of 1,000 names, from which the Fascist Grand Council selected 400 names in a proportion fixed by law between agriculture, industry, commerce, transport, banking, the arts, etc. Another 200 names were submitted by bodies representing teachers, civil servants, ex-service men, etc. The 600 names thus chosen—names of Fascists chosen by Fascists—were submitted to the electorate as a single list. The electorate consisted of every adult male producer or State pensioner. In each election the Government list was voted by majorities of over 95 per cent.

I do not suggest that these elections showed that 95 per cent. of Italians agreed with everything that Mussolini said and did; but they did reflect—most certainly—the will of the people, which was, and is, that Fascism should continue in power. Under the new system the new Chamber will be automatically supplied with fresh Councillors, who have risen, through election in the local Syndicates, to the seats of the mighty in Rome.

In the event of the death or resignation of the Head of the Government, it is the duty of the Fascist Grand Council to submit a list of names (said at present to be three) to the King, who will choose the person whom he considers most suitable as Mussolini's successor.

"And what of the Press?" the reader will ask. The Press is certainly controlled by the Ministry of Popular Culture (not so strictly controlled as is believed in

England; still, controlled). An intelligent Englishman or Frenchman, if he is prepared to spend a great deal of time in reading, can weigh conflicting views on foreign affairs; but so can an intelligent Italian, with little more trouble. And your Englishman or Frenchman, however intelligent he may be, cannot expect to be in possession of Cabinet secrets. Many things cannot be discussed in public, even in a democracy. In Italy and Germany, which are both full of tourists at all seasons, and where foreign newspapers (English, American, French, Swiss) are on sale in all large and many small towns, it would be impossible to keep the people ignorant of what is happening in Europe, and they are not, in fact, ignorant. The average Italian knows more of foreign affairs than the average Englishman. Far more foreign newspapers are on sale in a provincial city of Italy than in a similar English town. Moreover, there are at least five daily newspapers in Italy which are controlled by the Pope, not by the Duce, and these are often critical of Fascism; for the Roman Church is an international power with increasing influence in the democracies of the world. Of these newspapers, the chief is the *Osservatore Romano*, published from the Vatican City.*

The suggestion which one so often hears, in Liberal circles, that the Italians are being duped has no foundation in fact. I know the Italians, for I was not only born

* During Hitler's visit to Rome the *Osservatore* never mentioned the presence of the Germans at all. The Vatican had closed all its museums and picture-galleries to mark its displeasure. On the day of Hitler's state entry I read the following under Notes of the Day: "Jesus Christ comes to the Altar under the veil of the Eucharist without any apparatus of majesty. Our Lord seems to seek out the lowly, and is regardless of His honour. In the day of judgment how we shall repent of having lived near so much love without having given it due regard." The only other comment I noticed was oblique: it was a note recording the anniversary of the sack of Rome by the Visigoths!

amongst them, but a hill-woman of the Apennines was my foster-mother, and I know how critical they are, and always have been, of their rulers. Mussolini is loved as a representative Italian; the country is proud of his wit, wisdom, energy, audacity, and of his influence on the world; but he would come crashing from his high estate if he became incapable or even very unlucky. The Italians are less easily fooled than any other race in Europe (except, perhaps, the Greeks), and they would never endure for long a Government that did not represent the will of the people.

The average Englishman seems incapable of believing this. He cannot get the idea out of his head that the Italians would really like to be governed as the English are, and that Fascism is an unfortunate mistake, due to foreigners being an inferior people. He will not see that people organized in occupational groups can express their views and manage their affairs as freely as people organized in geographical groups. When a minority holds the balance of power in a democratic Parliament, you have the rule of a faction, whether it be the rule of Socialists, or the rule of financiers, or an unholy alliance of both. Anyway, it no longer represents the real will of the people.

Fascism has come to stay. Changes there will be, as in all human institutions, but it is most unlikely that during this century Italians will ever again elect representatives on a geographical basis or depart very far from the principles of the Corporate State.

A modern dictator, we must remember, is far from being all-powerful. Even Mussolini cannot do what he likes in Italy; he can only move with the support of public opinion. In the early years of his régime he wanted to reorganize the army, but had to withdraw the measure he contemplated, owing to the criticism it aroused. He

also wanted to tighten up the legislation against small-game shooting, but discovered that it would be too unpopular.

Yet in the land where St. Francis lived, and where Garibaldi died listening to the song of a bird, love of animals is general. It is true that beasts of burden are frequently overworked, but under Fascism conditions have improved. Mussolini has declared that "consideration for birds and beasts is one of the noblest characteristics of a country."* In his biography he tells of his sorrow at being parted from a siskin which he had to leave at his father's house. Often he used to release the traps set by bird-fanciers near Predappio. Since coming to power he has stopped the netting of quails, protected nightingales, limited the shooting of larks.

Certainly Mussolini cannot go in advance of the will of the people. At the beginning of the Abyssinian War the people were half-hearted towards it. ("We want work, not another war," was the opinion very freely expressed.) And it was only when sanctions were imposed that every man, woman, and child rallied to Mussolini. Especially the women.

A working woman of my acquaintance, shrewd, semi-literate, but well informed through conversation on a level rarely reached by similar individuals in England (the majority of Italians of all classes are interested in politics and know something about them), said to me in the summer of 1936: "Of course we want to be friends with England. We always have been. But I hope you won't try to starve us again; that was an ugly business."

It *was* an ugly business. Italy's Abyssinian adventure requires a chapter to itself, which will not be written by me, for I deplored Mussolini's methods at the beginning

* In issuing a decree for the protection of wild-life in Capri in 1929.

of the dispute, and our own methods afterwards. We said that we would support Abyssinia, admittedly only through the League of Nations, but we were never prepared to fight on behalf of Geneva. Nor was anyone else. The plain fact is that we had all promised to do things which we had no real intention of performing. As to sanctions, let us not forget that they operate primarily on the weak and the poor. Is it more merciful to try to starve a whole people than to bomb an open city? My friend had no doubt that bombs are preferable to the unseen pressure of unseen forces. She had no doubt, also, that these unseen forces—the “Judæo-Masonic combine,” as she had already begun to call them in 1936—came into action against Italy during the Abyssinian war.

“Not until Italy is self-supporting will we feel safe,” she said. “We’ll stand on our own feet. We shall never be able to trust any foreign nation, except when we are strong enough not to need help.”

“Even the Germans?” I suggested.

“Certainly not the Germans,” she replied. (I quote her words without comment). “There is no honesty in international affairs. But here we have an honest Government. An honest Government, anyway, than any other I can remember. Mussolini is *bravo*. He sees to it that the officials don’t eat at the expense of the poor. The Fascists have done much for us poor people, and we shall never go back to former ways. When I was a girl . . .” And the old lady became reminiscent.

Indeed, the Fascists have done much for Italy,* whose

* Amongst other things, they have made her too proud to bilk the stranger. Not all Italians are saints in this respect (far from it), but on my last visit to Rome I left my pocket-book containing 1,000 lire (£10) in a restaurant. It was returned to me intact. On the same evening I hailed a taxi, telling the driver to take me to a newspaper office: he replied that it was not worth my while to drive, as it was in the next street. Throughout Italy

soil was never, until recently, considered capable of supporting its philoprogenitive people. Before the Great War the pressure was relieved by emigration: 325,000 left Italy in 1900, and a rising number each subsequent year until the peak was reached in 1913, with 872,000 emigrants. After the war the exodus continued, at the rate of about half a million a year, until the United States and Canada closed their gates in 1921. To-day Italy, with almost double our birthrate, has to provide out of her resources for her growing population (she had 984,866 babies last year, this being an excess of 375,285 births over deaths), and she is proud of what she has achieved in this respect. So proud that she wants her emigrants back.

We hear little of the constructive activities of Fascism, and much of its dangerous ambitions. Let us, however, look also on its credit side. . . . First, the colonization of Libya is an immense experiment in mass-migration. In nine ships, carrying 2,000 each, the pioneers sailed for Tripoli, where they were met by Marshal Balbo. On their farms, ready built for them, they found all household necessities, draught animals, forage, a plough, a harrow, and other tools. Their fields had been ploughed for them, and seed was provided by the Settlement Board.

In five years' time these 2,000 families—18,000 people—will enter into possession of their farms, and in 25 years (if all goes well) they will have repaid all loans, and will be masters of their land instead of half-croppers.

In 1939, and again in 1940, another 3,000 families—say 25,000 people each year—will carry forward Rome's peaceful conquest of the desert.

there is now much less bargaining in shops and much less tiresome tipping in hotels than there used to be.

Nearer home, the Bonifica Integrale (Integral Land Reclamation Scheme) has gained an equal if not a greater success. I first saw the Pontine Marshes, near Rome, in 1901, when they were vast swamps, picturesque enough, but sinister and malarious.

In prehistoric times the Volscians had drained and cultivated this territory, but when they were conquered (or because they contracted malaria?) they lost heart and dug no more: their canals filled, and the water in them stagnated. Since those far-off days the reclamation of the Pontine Marshes was often considered and sometimes attempted. Julius Cæsar might have succeeded in carrying out the vast labours necessary, had not the dagger of Brutus crossed his plans; after him no Pope or Emperor had the strength for the task, until Mussolini. Napoleon's engineers attempted the task, but failed. And now, where buffaloes used to wallow, corn is growing; where bull-frogs croaked there is now the laughter of children.

At the lovely old Renaissance castle of Ninfa, some twenty miles from Littoria, you can still see what these swamps were like before the Black Shirts drained them. They are beautiful, but better to look at than to live in: in other parts, where the Bonifica has been at work, the mists over the marshes have parted, revealing churches, assembly-halls, cinemas, shops, market gardens, flowers, trim homesteads, new cities, new roads, 150,000 acres won from the waste of Nature, now full of fertile crops, and inhabited by 3,000 sturdy peasant families.

Circe, from the mountain where she turned the sailors into swine, looks down upon a thriving colony. Where Lucullus feasted on larks' tongues is now Sabaudia. Nearby are Littoria, Pontinia, Aprilia; and Pomezia is a-building. The age-old curse of malaria has been stamped

out.* Fascism has done in ten years what twenty centuries of previous effort could not achieve.

"Littoria has been spoken of as a miracle," said Mussolini, when opening the first of these new cities. "There is no miracle; here we have your work, your tenacity, the splendid ability of our engineers and experts, my determination, and the savings of the Italian people. The economic reconstruction of the world will be founded on rural values. The solid nations, the firm nations, are those which are based on the earth which bore them." Mussolini evolved his ideas from the soil, and gained his support from peasants who wanted to safeguard the fruits of their labour: Marx, on the other hand, evolved Communism in the reading-room of the British Museum: the writings of the two leaders reveal the sources of their inspiration: the one sunny, the other full of frowst.

Fascism, too, is justly proud of its *Dopolavoro* (After-Work) organization, whose influence has reached to the remotest hamlets of Italy. *Dopolavoro* embraces lectures, skiing parties, legal advice, theatrical shows, vocational training, swimming, riding, bicycling, walking, the study of art, and the pleasures of gardening, everything, in short, which a worker may do or contemplate in his spare time. The *Dopolavoro* travelling theatres, known as the *Cars of Thespis*, were inaugurated in 1929, and have proved very successful. There are now four of them, giving some 200 performances a year. The lyrical *Car of Thespis* carries seats for 3,000 people in the stalls; it is transported, complete with scenery and performers, in eight motor-trucks.

There are 20,000 branches of the *Dopolavoro* movement, and 3,000,000 members. At a place like Portofino

* The decline in malaria has been most marked throughout Italy. In 1921 there were 4,848 deaths from malaria; in 1935 only 1,696.

one sees, throughout the summer, parties of workers from Turin, Milan, and further afield arriving daily by the charabanc-load. Daily the great picture galleries of Italy receive their quota of workers. Daily the sportsmen and sportswomen from the factories arrive in the mountains. Last winter, on one day, there were 55,000 Dopolavoro workers out on skis. Every summer 10,000 certificates are issued to Audacious Cyclists, and 5,000 to Tireless Walkers. Dopolavoro has opened up new fields of recreation for Italian workers, taught them the pleasures of travel, and something of their rich artistic heritage.

Under Fascist law no woman may be dismissed on marriage, and every woman worker is entitled to leave her work one month before the birth of a child, and to return one month after, during which time she is entitled to full wages. Employers are legally bound to provide a crèche for the babies of their women workers; and in industries such as Snia Viscosa far more is done than is required by law. In its model villages the rents are progressively reduced on the birth of each child until a family with four children lives practically rent free. Employment is becoming hereditary: there are boys and girls whose acquaintance with Snia Viscosa began in its crèches and kindergartens.

Comparisons between the living conditions of workers of one country and another are notoriously difficult: there are peasants in Italy living on less than would support life in England; on the other hand I think the skilled worker is rather better off than he is in England. Personally, I should prefer the canteen dinner of a Fiat craftsman (soup, a cutlet, and salad, black coffee, half a pint of wine, and some fruit, costing rod.) to that of a similarly employed Englishman, but these things are a matter of taste.

Judged by vital and by educational statistics the Italians

are prosperous. The general death-rate has diminished from 181 per 1,000 in 1922 to 139 per 1,000 in 1935. Deaths from tuberculosis have been halved in ten years. Infant mortality has been reduced by 30 per cent. in the same period. Last year the régime sent over 800,000 poor children to the seaside or to the Alps. Expenditure on education has risen from £9,000,000 a year in 1922 to £17,000,000 in 1935. The 40-hour week and a Saturday half-holiday in industry were introduced by the Fascist Régime five years ago: the latter used to be called "Sabato Inglese," but has now become "Sabato Fascista."

* * * * *

Of all foreigners, the British are the most popular in Italy: even the proverb "*Inglese italianato e diavolo incarnato*" shows an affectionate understanding of our eccentricities. "The most spontaneous demonstration I have ever seen in Rome," an experienced journalist told me, "after that of the crowds who cheered the fall of Addis Ababa, occurred when Mussolini announced the signature of the Anglo-Italian Gentleman's Agreement."

When the guns began to boom to welcome Herr Hitler on his arrival in Rome, I was standing opposite the Colosseum. Suddenly it sprang into a wildfire of orange flame: it glowed as if with the faith of martyrs: every archway was blazing and belching smoke.

Horse-guards trotted between the torches which lit the two thousand years of history of the Via dell' Impero, and the red light from the Colosseum glinted on the steel of helmets and cuirasses. Following the troopers came the King-Emperor and the German Chancellor in an open victoria. The cheers were cordial, but no more. "*Ce peuple m'enchanté,*" said a French journalist: "*ils ont un sens de théâtre ravissant.*" True. It was a page out of the fairy-tale of Fate that this enemy corporal of twenty

years ago should drive in triumph through the Arch of Constantine; but it was a formal page. . . .

How different the scene when Mr. Neville Chamberlain arrived! Rome took him to her heart in a way she does to few of the mighty of the earth. The Eternal City is naturally rather blasé about distinguished visitors; but Chamberlain became instantly "il nostro Shamberlaineo." The reaction of the public surprised even those Italians who look on England as their second country. "He's a man I want to kiss," cried a fat lady in the crowd. Nobody told people to wait for hours in the streets to see him. There were no loud-speakers to reinforce the cheers and clapping. . . . Stimulating it is to think that of all the pomps and triumphs which Rome has seen, this simple visit should have been one of the most striking.

The previous May I had seen ninety submarines submerging in the Bay of Naples. The background was Vesuvius, smoking lazily over the loveliest seascape in the world. Down went the submarines. . . . It made one catch one's breath to think of the two thousand men on board, sinking down amongst the dolphins, amongst the inquisitive dolphins who were plunging about between the battle-cruisers. And I thought—as we were intended to think—what an ugly business modern war is, especially a naval war in these narrow seas.

For five minutes the submarines remained invisible, then they rose simultaneously and fired a salvo. It was a manoeuvre never before attempted, and it was perfectly performed. Indeed, the whole review went forward without a hitch, from the moment when the *Cavour* slid out from the quayside, her guns gleaming in the brilliant sun, to the climax of the mass attack by motor boats as sunset fell upon the "wine-dark sea." Overhead great bombers roared.

On board the *Rex*, itself a very sizable piece of Italian

propaganda, for she is one of the smartest of the Transatlantic greyhounds, the pageant of Roman society passed before my eyes. Is it in compliment to Germany that so many Italian women now bleach their hair and use the fatal henna shampoo—fatal, because it takes the natural gloss out of woman's glory? I doubt it. More probably the hairdressers are responsible. I wish Fascism, when it concentrates on social reform (as it is doing by urging people to say "*voi*" (you) instead of using the roundabout honorific of the third person) would concentrate also on flatter heels, less make-up, simpler hair-dressing: such fashions would well become the fine athletic girls which a traveller sees nowadays walking in the mountains and sun-bathing on the beaches of Italy.

Next day, again on the Via dell' Impero, I witnessed a review of 35,000 troops. Herr Hitler arrived with the King and Signor Mussolini, the latter remaining in the background during the plaudits of the crowd.

The goose-step is something sacred to a German. To an Italian the Passo Romano, as Mussolini calls it, is an amusing new dance-step. Mussolini kept gesticulating to the band opposite, beating time to the rhythm of the drums. Sometimes, when there was a gap between the detachments passing before the reviewing stand, a scowl passed over his mobile face, but it was only a passing cloud. When the Bersaglieri came by, at a jog-trot, with their green plumes waving, rapture lit his eyes.

The Italians to-day are a nation in arms, well mechanized, well drilled. In the air they may be even stronger than we think. Her pilots are magnificent. (But so are ours, and no war can be won by air-power alone.) If this pageant of the dictators was a rehearsal for a German-Italian combination against the democracies, then there are certain features in the situation which are comforting from our point of view.

Italy is in a poor position to withstand a blockade. Coal and oil she must have, and could not obtain except from Germany, who would presumably be engaged elsewhere. Spain's attitude in any Mediterranean adventure would be at least doubtful. The ports and great cities of Italy are extremely vulnerable, and her fleet could not withstand the navies of France and Britain. The electrification of her railways, while a boon to tourists, is a danger in wartime, for a single bomb can put a long stretch of line out of action. Her people have no desire to fight the English. And an imponderable factor is the most important of all: Italians and Germans would be uncomfortable allies.

If a world-war broke out Italian soil would be occupied by the Germans, if not by enemies. Her large tourist industry would perish. She would almost certainly lose her colonies, and her people would not for ever "believe, obey, fight."

As regards Tunisia, "protected" by France fifty-seven years ago, there is no reason why the Italian majority there should not receive more favourable treatment, especially in the matter of schools and in the right to use the Italian language in the law courts. As regards the Suez Canal administration, whose board consists of nineteen French directors, ten British, two Egyptians, and one Dutchman, it would be fair to include Italians, considering that they are now the second largest users of the Canal. In Jibuti there should certainly be a free zone, and the French will be unreasonable if they refuse to sell a railway which runs for more than half its length through what is now Italian territory, and only carries passengers and goods to Abyssinia.

Undoubtedly Italy was badly treated in the Peace Treaties. Reasonable concessions it would have been wise to make to gain her goodwill. *Bisogna essere forte:*

bisogna essere sempre piu forte ("We must be strong: we must be ever stronger"). The motto meets you at every turn, in almost every village throughout the kingdom. Italy is stronger than she has been for a thousand years; but are such slogans signs of warlike ardour? Our Elizabethans had no need of them when they went out to singe the King of Spain's beard. Mussolini knows his history. He is not anxious for a "lightning attack," or any conflict, if it can be avoided. He knows full well that his Corsican hero tried to fight a dozen short wars, and ended in St. Helena. He will not imitate Napoleon.

During the 1938 crisis in Czecho-Slovakia we listened to the radio every night, our host and his family, a chance peasant, and our two selves. Chamberlain's voice came faintly amongst the crags of the Apennines. Hitler's speeches were mixed with static. Mussolini made the crowd talk back to him. "We are on our feet!" he cried. ("*Lead us forward!*") "We are a State!" ("*An Empire!*") "We are strong by land, and sea, and in the air, as we never were." (*Rapturous applause.*) "I wish that certain melancholy strangers, abashed by our success, could be present here and listen to your acclamations, which have the strength of a storm or a cyclone! They ought to tear up their useless documents and recite an act of contrition, because, my comrades, one of the gravest ills of the world to-day is the spate of lies with which it is flooded. Foreigners preferred the Italy of another day" (*laughter*) "because for those foreigners, whom we have every right to despise, the people of Italy existed only to please or interest them. All that is over." ("*Yes, yes, for ever!*") "We prefer to be feared. The hate of others we exchange with hate! The world will have to reckon with Fascist Italy: strong, wilful, warlike Italy! Other peoples during this crisis have had their ups and downs; we have not lost

our calm. If we were called upon to fight, we would not hesitate a moment!" ("Now! now! We are ready!")

"We marched to Rome. In the years which followed we have marched from Rome!" ("We are marching!") "Nobody has been able to arrest that movement, and no power on earth can stop us!"

Italians are grand actors. They delight in hearing Mussolini in this mood, and respond to it with great quickness and vivacity.

I once saw the late Queen of Italy arrive unexpectedly in Portofino. She strolled towards the end of the peninsula, and was away about three-quarters of an hour. By the time she had returned the nuns of the local orphanage had organized a reception. A child of five stepped out upon the piazza, and, as the Queen arrived, she curtsied, presented her with a bouquet, and, without a stammer or a blush, recited an ode beginning:

*"O Regina bella,
Margherita d'Italia!"*

There are times, as I have said, when the Italians are dumb and grim. The Czecho-Slovak crisis was not one of them. In spite of many statements to the contrary which I have read, I assert that Italy did not mobilize. She would certainly have fought with Germany in the event of a European war, but she did not expect that Berlin would bomb London in order (if you please!) to enter Prague. Mussolini had taken the measure of the Red Horse of Troy.

As we were leaving our inn, the children of our host—Nino, Eva, Irma, Carla, and Maria-Lucia—stood sadly by the car. The hotel cat, prescient of departures, as cats so often are, looked at us, turned its back, and began to play with an autumn leaf. "It will be lonely without you," the

children said. "But you will be back soon—in the spring! Good-bye."

Of course we should soon be back! We knew it for certain when in Genoa a friend of mine told us that there were no gas-masks or searchlights ready. It was September 27th, 1938. "Why has the British Fleet mobilized?" he asked us. "What are we going to fight about?" . . .

Now we know what we may have to fight about. It is the road to the East, and the existence of our Empire, which will certainly be challenged if we block all attempts at expansion by the dictatorship powers.

Mussolini and Hitler, and their peoples, have still a wholesome respect for the British. They are genuinely (and to my mind legitimately) alarmed at our attempts to bring the U.S.S.R. into European politics, but they do not want to measure their strength with ours if it can be avoided.

There is no use complaining of the past, or even of the present disturbers of the peace. The dictators are not criminals for thinking that they could manage the British Empire better than we can; but events may prove that they have been very gravely mistaken. German organization is so complicated that it is always tying itself into inextricable knots, and in the event of war Germany and Italy are likely to fall foul of each other, and the Balkan countries. But if there is to be another conflict democracy will certainly lose, for we shall have to change our system.

CHAPTER IV

HITLER'S GERMANY

IT was on a beautiful estate in the Rhineland, belonging to a cousin of mine by marriage, that I learned, in my susceptible teens, how kind and good the Germans can be, and so often are.

Daily I used to bicycle to Coblenz for a language lesson and an hour of *haute école*. I had loved horses ever since childhood, but I had none of the graces of horsemanship. This German riding-school was a new and fascinating affair for me.

"Wie ein junger Gott, Herr Brown!" my instructor used to say, throwing out his chest and showing me how he made his chestnut stallion passage across the tan-dust of the school. The smell of horse-sweat, the shafts of sunlight I used as markers, the magnificent moustaches of my teacher, and the glory of the springy-patterned thoroughbreds he used to ride, come back to me across the years with the freshness of yesterday.

During the autumn manœuvres in the Rhineland in 1902 my host kept open house for his army friends. Amongst them I met a captain of Uhlans, who introduced me to that delectable mixture of Rhine wine and wild strawberries called *boule*. With him I talked much of horses, and wine, and war. Those were the days when mounted brigades—even divisions—were manœuvred in mass, and keen cavalrymen believed that battles would be won by "cold steel" and "shock action." My friend showed me the German lance, which was larger and heavier than the British. Machine-guns were still considered "troublesome and expensive toys." We both

thought war inevitable, since the Germans and English were too big to inhabit the earth together, but it made no difference to our friendship. We thought the war, when it came, would be an affair of a few weeks, or at most of a few months. And there are still lunatics holding the same views. . . .

This Rhineland of 1902 was very clean, very prosperous, proud, polite; a wonderful country, as it still is. One took off one's hat on entering a shop. After lunch one bowed to the lady of the house, saying, "*Mahlzeit!*" The Uhlan taught me to stand as stiff as a poker and click my heels.

On the evening of the last day of the great manœuvres, at which the Kaiser had been present, I sat with my Uhlan in a restaurant at a table adjoining that of some dozen resplendent Death's Head Hussars, who clinked their coloured glasses to *Der Tag*. . . .

That night, before I left for England, I translated Geibel's *Rheinsage* :

*Am Rhein, am grünen Rheine,
Das ist so mild in der Nacht,
Die Rebenhügel liegen
In goldner Mondespracht. . . .*

By Rhine, the verdant Rhine,
So mild in evening light,
Under a golden moon
The vineyards lie at night.

And far to Aachen's nave
Comes scents of fruit and vine,
Deep to the Kaiser's grave,
To stir him in his shrine.

Then on the grape-hills green,
Girt by a mighty sword,
With crown, and crimson shift,
A tall ghost goes abroad.

It is Karl, the Kaiser,
He whose almighty hand
For centuries untold
Has ruled this German land.

By Rudesheim there sparkles
Athwart the river spread,
A path of moonlit gold
For royal feet to tread.

The shadow crosses slow,
And slow, to shrive the math,
Karl passes through the land
With blessings in his path.

Then turns he back to Aachen
And sleeps unseen by men
Till woke at harvest-home
By scent of grapes again.

* * * * *

While I was a prisoner of war in Turkey I met various types of German officer. One, a big-bellied commissariat captain, spoke vauntingly of what Germany would do "after Hindenburg had smashed the English on the Somme."

"Don't imagine we are going to invade England," said this Falstaff of a fellow. "You will be quite free to have the sort of government you like, provided you hand over your fleet and dismantle your building yards. We won't let you starve, even though you have been trying to starve us. In fact, we'll lend you money to buy food; for you won't be quite so rich without your Empire."

But Falstaff, and some others, never effaced my first impressions. What is written upon the mind of boyhood remains, and I cannot think of Germans except as friends.

* * * * *

I saw the slump of currency in Munich in 1923, and

spent a few hundred thousand marks at Papa Benz's, then a very amusing night club. In Berlin things were more serious. The mark slumped to a million to the pound, then five million, and did not stop. Fantastic days for me, but terrible for those who saw the savings of a lifetime disappear in a few days or a few hours. Days for adventurers, speculators, ruthless bandits of the Bourse.

* * * * *

I returned in 1929, and again in 1932, on both occasions as a journalist.

A philosophy is being built up round National Socialism (I wrote) which will not be shaken by the sneers of intellectuals; to me, spending an hour at the Nazi headquarters in the Hedemannstrasse, not interviewing officials, but loitering about, watching the buyers in the bookshop, officials passing in and out, the children in the street saluting their heroes, it seemed obvious that here is a movement based on something more than promising everything to everybody.

It is a movement in tune with the popular will. The German people have been living on the brink of ruin for the last fifteen years. Hitler promises them a way out: eventually they will go his way rather than towards Communism.

Berlin North made my blood run cold. Drinking my Pilsener and looking at a horse-meat sausage in a certain red-lighted tavern, I noticed that only at our table was anything being served. Round us sat comely young people, some with the angelic mien of the Goth, others dark-haired, eager-eyed. Everyone present was there to sell his or her body. We may wince at the words, but what of the straits to which these children are being driven by hunger? I do not know how many drug-sellers and inverters there may be in Berlin to-day, but the general opinion is that there are more there than have ever before been assembled, in any city, at any time in history.

Some failure in civilization has made this possible. Everyone in the land who is young and unemployed and hungry—millions of boys and girls—feels that his spirit is being stifled in the toils of big business, reparations, and international finance. If I were a young German I should be a Nazi.

Nor will Berlin West reassure the sensitive observer: he will see wealth there, but it is a neo-Neronian siddling and feasting—negro music, bare white backs, orange lips carried to bubbling wine, fountains and flower gardens in cubist restaurants, rich food, table telephones, paunchy men with cigars saying that given time, the wheel of prosperity must come full circle. If I were a waiter at a fashionable place of this kind I should join any party that promised to exterminate the idle rich.

And yet the mass of the people are patient. I visited a very poor family in the Communist quarter: the man had been unemployed for a year; his allowance had continued to diminish until now he was in receipt of 30s. a week for himself, his wife, and *nine children*. They were living in two small rooms. Three cabbages for their daily meal of soup were simmering in a cauldron. A home-made wireless set stood on the only table. In a window-box some thirsty asters and a wilted geranium proclaimed that the constant struggle against overcrowding and poverty had not yet defeated the family, as I have sometimes seen a family defeated in our slums. They seemed to have hope. They believed that things would come right. I asked the wife if she was a Communist.

"Why do you suggest that?" she enquired suspiciously.

My guide explained. "She thinks that the private relief she is receiving may be cut off if she talks politics." I was sorry I had asked the question.

Presently she fetched her husband, who was nursing a sick child in the adjoining room. "I come of a family that has always served in the Army," he said, "and I served the whole four years of the War. I voted for the Social Democrats last time, but what do these parties mean? They don't bring us any food. I want a dictatorship, or the Kaiser to come back."

The previous day I had been to a large literary tea-party in one of the most beautiful parts of Berlin. Thinking over our conversation there, I feel now that so must the Romans have talked at Herculaneum.

Volcanic forces are close to us in every one of the capitals of Europe. If we neglect them, dally with palliatives, pursue the dangerous delusions of internationalism instead of the more laborious path of national prosperity, our too-comfortable, too-sententious civilization will be overwhelmed by the fiery ashes of revolution, and it will serve us right.

How well I remember that tea-party! The lovely garden, the well-fed people, the cakes and coffee and iced champagne cup, and my hostess saying: "Hitler? A house-painter! He's trying to climb to power on the shoulders of von Papen!"

Do people ever look back on their lives and reflect that they may be as wrong in their present opinions as they were in their past beliefs? Cromwell did, when he wrote to a friend entreating him "in the bowels of Jesus Christ" to consider whether he might not be mistaken. So did Darwin, who was always alive to the possibility of error in his work. While writing *The Origin of Species* he observed that facts which ran counter to his theory were quickly forgotten by him, while those confirming it were always present in his mind; so every month he carefully wrote down everything that did not tally with the Theory of Evolution, and kept the list constantly before him. Would that such integrity were commoner.

Until the Machtangreifung, the question of the Polish Corridor seemed to be leading straight to war, as it seems to be again, while these lines are being written. We must hope that once more appearances are deceptive. Under the Weimar Republic nothing permanent could have been arranged with Poland, but Hitler very quickly made a ten-year pact with Marshal Pilsudski. Colonel Beck was one of Pilsudski's friends, and carries on his tradition. Undoubtedly he is one of the cleverest diplomats in Europe. He knows the methods of the Comintern from A to Z, and may have convinced our Government of the impossibility of making the Communists fight our battles.

If the National Socialists had not come to power it is conceivable that the Germans might have turned to Communism, with fatal results for Europe. As Stalin wrote to a German Jew in 1923:

"DEAR COMRADE THALHEIMER: The coming revolution in Germany is the most important world-event to-day. The victory of the proletariat will, without doubt, move the centre of world revolution from Moscow to Berlin."

It is difficult to imagine such things, but few men in 1923 imagined the history of Adolf Hitler. There has never been a more romantic age than this, which has witnessed the rise of Masaryk, Atatürk, Mussolini, and Hitler; and the story of Hitler is, perhaps, the strangest of them all.*

Can we put any faith in this extraordinary man who has 80,000,000 Germans behind him, better armed, better led, more fully organized, and until lately more united than ever before for military conquest or commercial penetration? To-day obviously we cannot. "Is it peace, Jehu?" Europe asks, and Jehu, driving his *Volkswagen*, answers: "What peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are so many?"

But Hitler is a great man, whatever his failings. He would never have won his present position in Germany, or kept it with his unquestioned ascendancy over cleverer and more educated colleagues, unless he had been great in spirit. Most people who meet him feel this quality. Thomas Hardy, with his poet's insight, said that "the truly great have no middling ledge; they are either famous or utterly unknown." Hitler is famous, and possibly the most menacing figure in the modern world. He may be our enemy, although he declares the contrary in *Mein Kampf*, which anti-Nazis declare gives his plan of action for the future. It is foolish, anyway, to under-estimate an enemy. Whether we love or hate him, we should remember that he is the incarnation of a wronged and legitimately-indignant Germany.

I have met many of the notable figures of the world,

* See Appendix III.

but only Gandhi and T. E. Lawrence gave me the sense which Hitler does of inner strength and Franciscan simplicity. All three were ascetics. Complete sexual abstinence would presumably bring the world to an end if adopted by mankind at large, but practised by rare people like Hitler it gives them magnetism and mastery.

"Practised" is the wrong word. Hitler is utterly unself-conscious. He lives for his mission, which is to regenerate Germany. ("T.E." had real greatness, but he was curiously concerned with his own personality. Gandhi, drawn from the same social strata as Hitler, did not have the same hardening discipline.) Anti-Nazis say that Hitler's gifts are limited to "spell-binding": that he is a danger to the world because he is so limited, narrow-minded, incalculable. They may be right, and it is true that meeting Mussolini, for instance, one is immediately and powerfully impressed by his abilities, whereas meeting Hitler one does not feel—at least, I did not feel—in the presence of a powerful intellect. The impression he makes is psychic, and the reader is free to think I have been beglamoured by his achievements when I say that when we shook hands I felt at once that I liked and trusted him. Recent events have proved me wrong, but the feeling he evoked is certainly not peculiar to myself: it is a spell he casts over almost everyone he meets, and at least nine-tenths of Germany.

No doubt it is true that his education was neglected in youth, and cannot to-day be well-rounded. John Bunyan also had little scholarship, "and that," he tells us, "soon forgot." Gibbon was not a brilliant boy. Marconi was considered a dunce at school. These men had brains lying fallow. So had Hitler. A man who has built up National Socialism from half a dozen obscure individuals with no more money or education or influence than him-

self, meeting in the back room of a little beerhouse, must have mental as well as psychic power.

In Munich I have seen the Sterneckerbrau, where he made his first speech, and the Bürgerbraukeller, in the suburbs, from whose hall he led his men, unarmed, through beflagged and cheering streets, to the Odeonsplatz, where the demonstrators were mown down by machine guns. Hitler and the Nazi leaders were sixteen abreast, arm-in-arm, in the front rank of the marchers, trusting to the will of the people of Munich, who wanted them to come to power.

Here we must turn aside for a moment to consider one of the many malicious insinuations made about the German Leader: that when the firing broke out on the Odeonsplatz he threw himself on his face and crawled away to cover.

Hitler was arm-in-arm with a friend (Dr. von Scheubner-Richter), who was shot dead: as he fell he dragged Hitler down with him with such force that the latter dislocated his shoulder. To accuse him of cowardice because he was not shot is ridiculous: he could not have known that the bullet that hit his friend would not find another billet.

Eine Kugel kam geflogen
Gilt's mir oder gilt's dir?
Ihn hat es weggerissen,
Er liegt mir vor den Füssen,
Als war's ein Stück von mir.

A bullet sped—to me? to thee?—
He lies at my feet, a part of me.

Hitler fell because he was linked to a dead body. Other revolutionaries have a habit of directing the masses from the rear, but the Nazis have always led their men from the front rank, ready to expose themselves, and to suffer.

In Munich I have seen, also, many of Hitler's original

notes for his early speeches. They are orderly, methodical, neatly written, bearing every mark of an original mind. What interested me chiefly was a group of files containing notes on the Treaty of Versailles. No scholar preparing for a thesis could have organized his material more carefully than this lance-corporal with a taste for water-colour sketches. The pages of the printed Treaty are cut out and pasted on sheets of blue foolscap. Each page is underlined in red and black, to bring the chief points to prominence. From certain paragraphs arrows lead to the margins, where Hitler has written cross-references ("reparations in cash, see p. 6"—"surrender of shipping, see p. 9," and so on) and prepared copious statistics, showing with what care he composed the speeches which his critics asserted contained nothing but sound and fury. He is a mystic, and, like all real mystics, he has a tenacious grasp of detail. These notes were made after he had discovered his oratorical powers. No doubt that was the turning-point in his career.

Before 1919 his writing is that of a peasant, careful and laborious. Suddenly there is a change: his script becomes more fluid, bolder: the writer is a man who has found his way in life, and knows his strength.

How does he sway the masses? I have heard him many times, and have heard more fluent and more melodious voices, but never one that weaved such magic ties between the speaker and his audience.

During the three-hour oration at the Kroll Opera House on February 20th, 1938, the whole speech was read, and read very quickly, with no pauses, except during the applause. Even during a solid hour of statistics he kept everyone galvanized by the cadence of his sentences. During the rhetorical passages his voice mounted to the pitch of delirium: he was a man transformed and possessed: we were in the presence of a miracle: fire might

have fallen from heaven or the chandelier of the Opera House might have come crashing down: the tension was almost unbearable until the passionate voice was drowned by the cries of those who listened: cries of suspense released.

The delirium was real—Hitler was in a frenzy at these moments, but he was able to create this atmosphere—this curious sense of collective hysteria—without losing his own self-control: whatever his emotion, a steady hand turned the pages of his speech. He possesses that rarest of mental combinations, intense passion harnessed to a cool brain.

This is part of the secret of Hitler's power. Another is his intuition. He has a sense of things to come. "I have the security of a sleep-walker," he said, during the remilitarization of the Rhineland, when half his generals were expecting a French invasion.

Finally, his power is based on his shrewd common-sense and judgment of character. Generally speaking, he has chosen his associates wisely. Inevitably, some of them have proved unworthy, but there has never been a revolution with more loyalty amongst the leaders.

To-day there is still loyalty amongst the Nazi chiefs, but the Party as a whole has gone back in popular favour. To some extent this is inevitable: even the cleverest propaganda has a boomerang effect. Moreover, some of the wisest heads in Germany, especially the Army heads, mistrust Nazi ambitions.

* * * * *

In prison Hitler dictated *Mein Kampf* (originally called by the awkward title of *Three and a Half Years' Struggle*), in which he urges Germany to make friends with England, and to steel herself for a fight to the death with France. "In the annihilation of France, Germany

sees the means for our nation to obtain full development in another direction. Almighty God, bless our weapons!"

If *Mein Kampf* is really the guide to Hitler's action, then friendship with England must be the keynote of his policy, for he emphasizes this again and again. "The only two possible allies for Germany are England and Italy." It is unfair, however, to extract sentences from a very long book, written fifteen years ago, and apply them to the politics of to-day, without considering the work as a whole.

Hitler explained his policy to a French journalist on the eve of the Franco-Soviet pact:

"When I wrote *Mein Kampf*," he said, "I was in prison. It was the time when French troops occupied the Ruhr district. I would despise myself if I were not a German first and foremost in moments of conflict. But to-day there is no reason any more for a conflict. You want me to correct my book, like a writer who edits a revised edition of his works. But I am not a writer; I am a politician. I do my correcting in my foreign policy itself, which is based on Franco-German understanding. I mean to enter my correction into the pages of history.

"I know what you think in France. You think, 'Hitler makes declarations of peace to us, but is he really sincere?' Instead of solving psychological riddles, would it not be better if you would apply your famous French logic? Is it not an evident advantage to our two countries to enter into good relations? Would it not spell ruin for both countries if they clashed again on the battlefield? Is it not logical that I should strive for what is most advantageous to my country? And is it not peace which is most advantageous?"

"My personal efforts toward such an understanding will continue. But this more-than-regrettable Pact would create a new factual situation. Are you in France really conscious of what you are doing? You permit yourselves to be dragged into the diplomatic game of a Power which wants nothing but to throw the great European nations into confusion.

"You would be well advised to consider seriously my offers of understanding. Never has a German leader made you such frequent offers. I beg you to pay attention to what

I am going to say now. There are final chances in the lives of nations. To-day France, if she will, can put an end forever to that 'German Menace.' You can cancel the terrible mortgage which weighs upon the history of France. You have before you a Germany nine-tenths of which have complete confidence in their leader, and that leader says to you: 'Let us be friends!'

Publication of this interview was deliberately delayed in Paris for a week, until the Franco-Soviet Pact had been ratified by the Chamber of Deputies. A week after that the re-occupation of the Rhineland came like a lightning stroke. Not that something of the kind was entirely unexpected, but when Germany marched 30,000 troops into the demilitarized zone, angry comments on the unilateral repudiation of treaties filled the Press of France and England. France was on the edge of war; but after all the territory occupied by the German troops was German.

Can we blame Germany for tearing up the restrictive clauses of the Treaty of Versailles as soon as possible? Would we not have done the same ourselves, if placed in a similar position? With regard to disarmament, Germany had offered to limit her forces to 300,000 men, if others did the same. A whole series of concrete proposals were made, non-aggression pacts, air-pacts, etc., but the only agreement concluded was that with Great Britain, whereby Germany agreed to keep her Navy within a ratio of 35 per cent. of ours. Hitler's reading of history had convinced him that anyone who threatened England's sea-power was bound to fight her, sooner or later, so he removed that obstacle to peace, in spite of serious opposition from his naval advisers.

At that time he wanted to be friends with us. He may still do so. Sooner or later we shall have to come to an understanding with Germany, and that understanding will necessarily include a clear delimitation of spheres of

influence, in the Balkans and elsewhere. And we must, of course, support France against any unreasonable claims by the Axis Powers.

I shall examine the French and Balkan positions in subsequent chapters. There is really nothing to prevent a reasonable settlement except the dread spectre of suspicion. That is what is keeping all the world in suspense; and admittedly Hitler has given us cause for complaint. Let us reflect, however, on our reaction to things as they are. We cannot trust Hitler? Very well, are we therefore to attack him at once? It is a possible theory, and one popular with Communists. But if we are to exterminate everyone in Europe whom we consider untrustworthy we shall never be at peace again.

Fortunately, there is an alternative to doing nothing. We can prepare, simultaneously, for both war and peace. War, if Germany transgresses certain limits; otherwise peace. The limits I shall discuss in due course: our contribution to reconciliation, if reconciliation is still possible, should be confined to two points:

(a) In the event of normal relations being re-established (as one day they must be) we should publish more information about the laudable enterprises of National Socialism. For years past our newspapers have selected for publication chiefly the evil they find in Germany. In the present state of tension this is understandable, even if it is not wise. But if we would be friends, we cannot forever maintain that Hitler's aggressive action in Bohemia—wrong as it was in our view, and probably from the standpoint of Germany's true interest—has put Hitler, or Germany, beyond the pale of civilized people. After all, we have seized many parts of the earth, and have governed many people against their consent. It will be necessary, one day, to do what we can to let our people know of the virtues rather than the vices of our cousins across the

North Sea. It is sometimes said that dictators are unduly sensitive about foreign criticism, but surely they are entitled to take notice of what is written in the newspapers of a democracy, considering that what is written influences the decisions of the electors? How are Germans to know what British Government will be in power next year? Of course, such efforts to promote better feeling could only operate in an atmosphere of confidence, which does not at present exist.

(b) The colonial question will have to be settled. Germany's claim that she was "robbed of her possessions" is absurd. She lost them as a result of defeat in the Great War, and at the time *væ victis* seemed a reasonable principle to apply. But we are entitled to apply such a principle *for one reason only*, that Might is Right. It is a principle that Germany thoroughly understands, but with which we do not agree. If there is to be war, then obviously the question does not arise: otherwise it must be solved, sooner or later.

What are the objections to the return of the German colonies?

That they are held by the Powers concerned as mandates from the League of Nations. Yes, but the League will do what we and the French suggest. We transferred these territories to the Mandatory Powers without consulting the natives, and can retransfer them. As a result of the Great War, we received 2,500,000 square miles of new territory, and 93,000,000 people. Some of these gains—if gains they be—we must give back.

But the Germans cannot be trusted with subject peoples, after the way they have treated the Jews. Yes, but the Germans were commended for their administration of their colonies by many eminent English travellers. As to the Jews, the Germans reply that we—the champions until lately of self-determination—are filling the prisons of

Palestine with Arabs whom we call "terrorists," but the rest of the world patriots.

But Germany is planning to make war, and colonial concessions will enable her to raise an African army. Yes, but if there is to be war between us, which God forbid, the issue will be decided in Europe, rather than in Africa. Further, territories in Africa would be hostages that Germany would give to fortune, knowing that if war broke out she would again lose them. As to coloured levies, how can we or France object, when we both maintain such armies ourselves?

But Germany only sent 20,000 colonists overseas before 1914. She cannot need her colonies for settlement; nor for trade, because her imports from her colonies were only 3 per cent. of her total inward trade in 1914. And as regards raw materials, she can buy what she wants from the Mandatory Powers at the same price as the Mandatory Powers themselves pay. Yes, but the Germans reply: "If colonies are useless, why do you want to keep them?" Before the war, Germany had £3,000,000,000 invested abroad, and was able to use the income from these investments to buy the raw materials she required. Versailles deprived her of all her foreign capital. What is the use of telling her to buy what she wants, when she has no gold to buy it with?

Exports of raw materials from the former German colonies amounted to about £8,000,000 in 1935: Germans say that this amount could be trebled within ten years under Nazi administration, and would provide for three-quarters of Germany's total requirements of such materials. It is clear that the effect of returning colonies to Germany would be to make her more self-supporting and more contented. Now, do we want Germany to be more self-supporting and more contented? If we do, then the return of territories to which our only claim is that we won the

war is not too great a price to pay. Admittedly the political difficulties would be serious, but not insurmountable if thereby we could bring peace to Europe.

Finally, Mr. Duff-Cooper tells us that Hitler is a "thrice-perjured traitor." To give colonies to such a scoundrel would be shameful.

Certainly we must refuse to discuss anything with Herr Hitler in his present mood; and certainly to-day we must regard Germany as a potential enemy. But we cannot consider Germany as a *permanent* enemy: one day the Colonial question will again arise. Meanwhile we must remember that our own record is not perfect in the matter of promises: history will not hold us guiltless of the present situation in Palestine. We should do well, also, to consider carefully and calmly the accusations made against Herr Hitler with regard to the Anschluss and Czecho-Slovakia. It is true that he said that he had no designs on the independence of Austria and then marched to Vienna with his army, and that he said that there would be "no more surprises," and soon afterwards pounced on the Sudetenland. But with regard to Austria, he came to an agreement with Herr Schuschnigg which was never kept by the latter. He had no intention of entering Austria as a conqueror until Dr. von Schuschnigg foisted his faked plebiscite upon the people under circumstances which I describe below. As to Czecho-Slovakia, Herr Henlein, with the full approval of Herr Hitler, made an offer to Prague, in his Carlsbad speech of March, 1938, which provided for the autonomy of the Sudetens in the Czecho-Slovak Republic. These demands were entirely reasonable, and would have averted the crisis of September. They were rejected by Dr. Benes. Thereupon the Germans supported their kinsmen, to free them from the domination of a Czech clique.

Hitler does not hate England, but he must hate the

kind of people who wanted to keep Austria "independent" and the Sudetens under Czech rule. They are the same people who told us that the Saar would never be so foolish as to vote for a return to Germany. What was this idea of nationality, they asked the Saarlanders, compared to the profits to be made from having an international status?

The Saarlanders had every opportunity to learn the worst about Germany. Some of the cleverest propagandists in Europe were at work amongst them, telling them day by day how lucky they were not to be under the jack-boots of the Germans. And yet, surrounded by all possible safeguards for a fair vote, the Saarlanders chose to rejoin Germany with an enthusiasm and unanimity which up to that time had never before been seen in history.

It was the same in Austria. I was there during the Anschluss, and saw what happened.

I was at Kitzbühel on March 9th, 1938, when Dr. von Schuschnigg announced his famous plebiscite, to be held on Sunday, March 13th, in eighty-four hours' time.

Next day news came to us of rioting in Innsbruck, the arming of Communist crowds in Vienna, and the death of four Austrian Nazis.

An Austrian friend said to me: "I'm a business man, and I don't mix in politics more than I can help. I'm against the Nazis on the whole, but this plebiscite of Schuschnigg's is a ramp, and will lead to trouble."

It was a ramp. No voting lists were ready. The ballot papers were marked "Ja," so that if the voter wanted to record "Nein," he had to bring with him a white sheet of paper, nine centimetres by six. It was expressly stipulated that the papers could be handed in either open or folded, so that it would have required no Sherlock Holmes

at the polling booth to have discovered a voter's political sympathies.

In Kitzbühel I picked up a Vaterland Front manifesto which ran :

Deutsch sein, heisst frei sein !
Deutsch sein, heisst treu sein !
Ja oder Nein ?
Mit Schuschnigg für Österreich
Ja oder Nein ?
Ja !

The intention to confuse the issue was clear : " Germans are free, Germans are loyal, therefore vote for Austria, and keep Schuschnigg in power ! "

Dr. von Schuschnigg hoped to catch the Austrian Nazis napping, and relied on the readiness of the average man to vote for something which seems to promise a quiet life, but he was not very sure of his own plans, for he did not reveal them even to his own Cabinet, but only to the Vienna correspondent of the *New York Times*. . . .

On Monday, March 7th, at midday, a confidant of Dr. von Schuschnigg had approached Signor Mussolini with an enquiry as to Italy's attitude towards the plebiscite. Mussolini's immediate answer was that it was a mistake. " This weapon will explode in your hands, " he said.

Who could doubt it, knowing the conditions in Austria ? Who could doubt that my friend in Kitzbühel was right, and that the plebiscite was a swindle ?

No one doubted it in Austria, or indeed anywhere in Europe, except in England. In England and America the public were told that the wicked Germans were trying to stir up trouble again. Even *The Times*, which is usually fair in its news, gave no indication of the fury aroused amongst moderate-minded Austrians, and commented as follows in its issue of March 10th : " In Great Britain,

public opinion is likely to welcome the plebiscite as the opportunity for the free vote of a free and independent people . . . the test in British eyes will be whether it is carried out fairly and peacefully, without pressure from outside."

The free vote of a free people!

Austria's international status rested on the Treaties of Versailles and St. Germain, which laid down that the independence of Austria was inalienable except with the consent of the Council of the League of Nations.

As long ago as November 12th, 1918, the Austrian National Assembly had declared unanimously that German Austria was an integral part of the German Republic. Clemenceau replied by threatening to occupy further territory across the Rhine unless this resolution was rescinded within a fortnight. Nevertheless, Dr. Dinghofer, in a speech to the Austrian Assembly, declared: "The idea of a greater Germany is not dead for us Germans of these provinces, and never, never will it die! Like a star glowing out of the darkness the hope beckons to us. In all the sorrow and all the care which now surround us, I still see glowing the hope of reunion with our Motherland."

On April 24th, 1921, the Tyrol Diet held a plebiscite which gave 144,324 votes for union with the German Reich, and 1,794 against.

On May 29th, 1921, the Salzburg Diet held a similar plebiscite, which gave 103,000 votes for union, 800 against, and 200 invalid ballot papers. More than 90 per cent. of the electorate went to the polls; and the result was almost exactly similar to that announced on April 11th, 1938, seventeen years later—namely, more than 99 per cent. in favour of reunion with Germany.

An Act passed by the Austrian Parliament to hold such a plebiscite for the whole of Austria was never carried into

effect owing to pressure from the British, French, and Italian ministers in Vienna; and various local plebiscites were also forbidden.

In 1931 Austria endeavoured to bring about a Customs Union with Germany, but the Hague Court of International Justice, by an extraordinary verdict, found that such an arrangement would be illegal.

In 1934, after the revolt of the Austrian Nazis, some 20,000 of them were imprisoned, and 40,000 took refuge in Germany. In February of 1934 the Governments of Great Britain, France, and Italy declared that "they take a common view as to the necessity of maintaining the independence and integrity of Austria," and the same hypocritical balderdash occurs in the Franco-Italian agreement of January 7th, 1935, the Anglo-French declaration of February 3rd, and the resolution of the Stresa Conference of April 14th, of the same year.

What did this phrase mean? Independence of Austria from German influence, or the independence of the Austrian voter to choose his own destiny? Was there a deliberate attempt to distort public opinion, or merely a desire to cover up our encirclement of Germany with elegant phrases? If we meant to allow the Austrians the right to determine their own conditions of life, it is strange that they were given no chance to express their opinions until Dr. von Schuschnigg asked them to come to the polls to say that they wanted to be free, Christian, German, and independent of Germany. On April 10th, 1938, when the Austrians were asked clearly—Yes or No—whether they wanted reunion, 99 per cent. of them jumped gaily into the arms of Germany.

* * * * *

In Kitzbühel, on Friday evening, we heard over the radio of the postponement of the plebiscite, of Dr. von

Schuschnigg's resignation, and that Austrian Nazis were to maintain law and order if the Germany army advanced.

Next morning, Saturday, March 12th, when Dr. Goebbels read his Leader's fateful proclamation, we were sitting—some twenty or thirty of us—in a little *wein-stube*. We were just an average Kitzbühel crowd; people from the village, hotel guests, ski instructors, and some of us, I know, were by no means ardent Nazis when Dr. Goebbels began to speak in his resonant voice. But a miracle occurred when he said: "This morning the soldiers of the armed forces of Germany are marching across the Austrian frontiers, while in the blue sky above our German aeroplanes are soaring!"

The audience was German. There was magic in the name. Never have I felt so unmistakably the influence of unseen forces as in that little room, the scene of many careless hours, now suddenly being filled with history. Under the sway of a common emotion the audience rose to its feet and sang "Deutschland über alles" and the "Horst Wessel Lied." All over Kitzbühel, I heard later, wherever men and women had gathered, the effect was the same.

No one was coerced. The joy of the people was real; they felt that everyone must be delighted at the swift movement of troops, at this dramatic, decisive ending of uncertainty. No longer was Austria a lone child; now she was part of the most powerful nation in Europe. Austria was German, and answered the call of the blood. Seen from the London angle, the march of the German army looked like an act of aggression. Seen from the Kitzbühel angle, the troops were brothers, come to save Austria.

In the streets of the village Austrian Nazis grew out of the ground; their uniforms must have been hidden for four years. They were, in some cases, a tight fit, but good

evidence that they were storm-troopers at heart. Everyone greeted them with the "Heil, Hitler" salute. All the police put on *swastika* armlets. German and Austrian flags hung out, side by side, from every window. The town band played. Peasants flocked in from the surrounding country and paraded through the streets with torches. The hillsides flamed with enormous bonfires. Kitzbühel was Nazi, to the last boy and last girl.

To be accurate, however, not to the last adult. The proprietor of a popular café, whose wife was a Jewess, sat at an empty bar, listening to the rejoicings outside. Some rich and elderly Austrians of my acquaintance mourned the passing of their hopes for a Hapsburg restoration. And I met an English friend who was depressed to see dear, casual little Austria becoming so political. "How fortunate," he said, "that this is the end of the skiing season!"

These events in Kitzbühel, typical of what happened in many places in Austria (not all, certainly, but many), entitle us to conclude that the Nazi régime is popular with the masses. Or does the reader believe that the masses were duped? In Kitzbühel he could hardly have sustained such an opinion, for during six months of the year it was filled with visitors from all over the world and newspapers in every language. If the masses were duped, then we cannot have much faith in democracy. But if, on the contrary, with first-hand information from visitors as to what was happening in Germany, they voted Nazi of their own free will, some of us must revise our estimate of the Third Reich.

Sometimes one feels that one is glued up in lies, like a fly in treacle, and that it is almost impossible to get clear of the mess. Such was my feeling when I heard the British Broadcasting Corporation announcing to the British Empire on Sunday morning, March 13th, at

10 a.m., that "the German army has invaded Austria, and Austrians and Jews are flying before it." The mincing announcer never mentioned (but small blame to him; he was merely reading in his bored way what some "pink" of Portland Place had written) the delirious delight with which Adolf Hitler had been received at Linz on the previous evening, nor did he so much as hint that a wild-fire of enthusiasm for the Anschluss was sweeping through the country.

By Sunday evening the real facts were too obvious to be disregarded. Some of our newspapers, however, still wrote of the Rape of Austria. *Rape!* If she had not been taken when she gave herself so freely, she would have fallen into a hysteria that might have plunged all Europe into civil war.

It was on the balcony of the Town Hall at Linz, on Sunday evening, March 13th, the day of the deferred plebiscite, that Hitler, listening to the tumult of his countrymen crying, "One folk, one State, one Leader!" determined on the union which marks for ever the fall of the House of Hapsburg.

Little did old Franz-Joseph think, in the glittering days of the *fin de siècle*, that there was a poor art student living in his dominions who would one day oust his line and be acclaimed by millions with a devotion his dynasty never knew.

On Monday morning, in the Church of the Capuchins at Vienna, where the Hapsburgs lie in their baroque glory, I found some old people praying. Outside, the loud-speakers brayed and crowds surged this way and that. Vienna was a city of spurs and swords and salutes.

By the door of the aristocratic old Meissl und Shadn, and all the other big hotels, stood German sentries with rifles and tin hats. They marked the presence of German generals. When they were being relieved it was slightly

comic to see them trying to pass through the revolving doors with a smart and soldierly bearing. . . .

Most Jewish shops in Vienna's Bond Street (the *Karntnerstrasse*) had a notice to say that they were non-Aryan. Those that had omitted thus to warn the public of their race found the word *Jude* scrawled in red paint across their windows. A carpet merchant, Ekbar Ali, had taken the precaution to warn the public that his was a "Nazional-persiches (arischer) firma"—but who would buy Persian carpets during these days of destiny? A story went the rounds that a Jewish merchant found himself between two firms which proudly announced their purity. One put up a notice, "Arischer firma," and the other, "Rein arischer firma." The Jew was afraid that he would lose all his custom (to-day the story has a pathetic note), so he put up a sign: "Eingang hier!"

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After luncheon I went to the Spanish Riding School, where the perfection of *haute école* is performed by the famous Lippizaner horses, the pride of equestrian Europe.

We were far from politics in that beautiful white hall, watching those wonderful creatures, so strong, so sensitive, in such perfect and joyous balance.

It is the tradition of the Spanish School that everything is taught by kindness. The riders carry sugar in the pockets of their old-fashioned double-breasted coats; they never raise their voices; they never do more than touch with the point of their whips the satiny coats of their pupils, whose ears are pricked and whose eyes are shining with the pride of their accomplishments. Their lovely movements are artificial, of course, for no horse of the steppes ever danced a *caracole* or performed the *piaffer*, but they are magnificent in their harmony and in their

emphasis on a poise and dignity which the world is losing in this age of machines.

A million people were gathering in the Ring to see Hitler enter. Here I was almost alone with these superb animals and their riders, alone with the ghosts of eighteenth-century Vienna.

* * * * *

Eight deep, ten deep, people were standing in the Ring, held back by German soldiers, to whom the spectators offered chewing gum and chocolates. It was a gentle spring evening. Plane-trees were just beginning to bud. Aeroplanes loomed against the sunset and dipped at us with a full-throated roar. A pigeon fluttered to the head of the equestrian statue which prances above the portico of the Opera. A radio van came past, announcing from nowhere visible that "beautiful Vienna lies in the sunlight, awaiting her Führer," and the voice melted away on its rubber tyres, impersonal, fantastic, and not strictly truthful, for the sun had already set.

I made my way to a balcony of the Bristol Hotel. From here I saw the greatest crowd that has ever assembled in Vienna, stretching from far beyond the Opera to the Imperial Hotel. All Vienna was not rejoicing—the Jews, for instance—but the scene below me left no doubt about what the majority were thinking.

Hitler came almost unexpectedly as dark was falling. I had thought that there would be some elaborate pageantry; instead, there he stood alone in a big grey car. Vienna has seen the ebb and flow of many conquests, but never a conqueror who once shovelled snow in her streets.

A new chapter had opened in the history of Europe, but a chapter which already seems like ancient history, so swiftly have events moved since then. We are told

now that Vienna has tired of her first fine Nazi rapture. Perhaps. But only a very small minority of her citizens would return to the days of von Schuschnigg. Austria is not entirely contented, but she is immeasurably better off than she has ever been since 1914.

Vienna restaurants are doing a roaring business; many of them have increased their turnover by 400 per cent. The thoroughly efficient Winter Help Work has looked after sick and old as they have never been cared for previously. Amongst youth there is a natural spirit of pride and optimism, stimulated by the great expansion of the German people. And to-day there is no able-bodied man without work in the Ostmark. At the time of the Anschluss, 10 per cent. of the population of Austria was unemployed. The rich may grumble, but the Austrian poor bless Adolf Hitler.

Vast schemes for farm roads and land improvement have been undertaken. Tyrolean timber and dairy products, Styrian mines, and the steel-works of the Alpin Montan Gesellschaft have taken on a new lease of life. Great latent resources in water power and the important magnesite mines of the Ostmark are being developed. At the head waters of the navigable Danube, Vienna expects to control the trade of the Balkans. And she will, to a large extent.

Germany may be arrogant, and stupid, and untrustworthy. Often in the past we have been accused of the same vices. Her faults are obvious. But let us also consider her virtues, for they are many.

CHAPTER V

EIN VOLK, EIN REICH, EIN FÜHRER!

IN the lobby of the Adlon Hotel, any time before Hitler became Chancellor, you could see prosperous cosmopolitan gentlemen smoking big cigars, while outside, in the streets, German children of both sexes sold their bodics for a shilling or two. That, as I have already written, was the result of the Treaty of Versailles, whereby we sought to bind Germany with fetters of gold, demanding astronomical sums in reparations, whose total was never fixed.

We have forgotten—or we never knew—the miseries and degradations that Versailles inflicted on Germany, with our consent, if not with our approval. We do not know what it is to be defeated, starving, defenceless. The Germans know, and will not soon forget. Nor will I, who saw things in Berlin which cannot be printed.

In the old days a war correspondent could view a battle through his field-glasses and gallop back with a report to startle the world. Nowadays no one person can see a battle, and whatever news he collects is most unlikely to get past the censor. So also, in describing the fight of modern Germany to free herself from the neuroses as well as the material results of defeat, I must rely more on evidence weighed and documents collated than on my own impressions.

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First, at the risk of entering into barren controversy, we must examine the statement, so often made by opponents of National Socialism, that Communism in

Germany was never a real danger, and that Hitler climbed to power on the shoulders of a cleverly propagated panic.

The facts are that Communism began to advocate revolution in Germany on August 4th, 1914, when the Spartakus League was formed by Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Liebknecht, and Klara Zetkin. (The latter, in her old age, came to call Stalin "a devil incarnate.")

Liebknecht declared, as early as May 1st, 1915, that "an international proletarian class war is the Socialist command of the hour. The greatest enemy of every people is its own country." At the beginning of 1917 the Spartakists issued a pamphlet entitled "Famine," calling on the workers to rise and proclaim the "solidarity of the international proletariat." Strikes "to weaken the home front" were fomented by them in the Ruhr in January and February, 1917; in Hamburg and Bremen in March; in Kiel, Braunschweig, Berlin, Leipzig, Hanover, and Dresden in April. In August there was a naval mutiny in Wilhelmshaven, of which the Communists wrote that "the rebel sailors have given their class comrades a signal and an example." In December, Rosa Luxemburg wrote that "the successful Russian revolution, combined with a successful German revolution, will be unconquerable." Lenin agreed, and wrote urging his comrades in Berlin to "attack world-imperialism decisively."

Immediately after the armistice in 1918 the first Communist rising in Germany began in earnest. Workers' and Soldiers' Councils were formed in twenty-four cities. Throughout December there was street fighting in Berlin (organized by Radek-Sobelsohn, the Polish journalist who has lately been liquidated by Stalin), and a hundred people were killed. Bremen fell into the hands of the Spartakists in February, 1919. General strikes were called in Elberfeld and Bochum, and a Red army was formed,

with its own artillery. In March, 1919, hundreds of people lost their lives in street fighting in Berlin.

In April, 1919, a Communist Government came into power in Munich, under the leadership of three Russian Jews, Leviné-Nissen, Levien, and Axelrod. This "Soviet Republic" lasted less than a month, but cost the citizens of the Bavarian capital 927 dead and several thousands wounded. A particularly brutal murder of hostages (nine men and a woman) is noteworthy because of similar atrocities, inspired by similar ruffians from Moscow, which have lately occurred in Spain. To me the murders are personal, because one of the hostages, of just my own age, was the son of a dear friend of my family.

In March, 1920, a new Communist rising occurred in the Ruhr, in which 208 soldiers of the German Army were killed and 578 wounded. In April, a Russian terrorist, Max Holz, burned and pillaged villages in the Vogtland district. In October there was a Communist riot in Hamburg, in which 17 police were killed and 69 wounded. And so on, for the next three years.

During the inflation of 1923, when money lost its purchasing power, the middle-classes became paupers. But they did not therefore become Communists. On the contrary, they began to arm themselves, since the Government seemed powerless to protect them. The Catholic party, the peasants, and what remained of the Junkers and the aristocrats were bewildered and bankrupt, and looking about for new political expedients. The Communists realized that other methods were required to convert them, so they decided to go underground, and to sap the foundations of the State more thoroughly than they had yet done before again attempting its overthrow.

From 1924 to 1929 they bent their energies to this subterranean subversion, employing the large experience of Russia under the Czarist régime and the talents of many

revolutionaries from that country. The Weimar Republic gave full scope for their activities in the name of free speech and a free press. Bourgeois prejudices, bourgeois culture, and bourgeois morality were ridiculed. Patriotism was described as a sin against peace, and religion as an enslaving superstition. Anti-religious festivals were broadcasted, clergymen were shown in caricatures committing acts of indecency. Zuckmeyer, a poet praised as "great" by a Social-Democratic Minister for Culture of that time, wrote verses such as the following:

"The cats are caterwauling on the roofs
Like the Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane."*

Pornographic literature was displayed in the leading bookshops of the principal cities, and eagerly bought by boys and girls who thought themselves emancipated from the cramping complexes of their elders. A Left-wing journalist of great experience in Russia as well as Germany recorded the following books and pamphlets for sale at a prominent street corner in Berlin in the summer of 1932.†

The Witches' Love Kettle.
Eroticism in Photography.
Sexual Error.
Flagellantism and Jesuit Confession.
Sadism and Masochism.
The Labyrinth of Eroticism.
The Whip in Sexuality.
Sappho and Lesbos.
The Cruel Female.
Massage Institutes. (For adults only.)

* *The German Revolution*, by H. Powys Greenwood. Routledge, 1934.

† *Germany Puts the Clock Back*, by E. A. Mowrer. Lane, 1933.

The Third Sex.

The Venal Female.

Venal Love among Civilized People.

Places of Prostitution in Berlin.

The Weimar Republic failed because it had no convictions, no compass of principle by which to steer. There is a Slav element in the Germans, and the same dark forces as had captured Russia were working here in an underworld of failures, hysterics and sadists. All travellers to Germany at this time noted the corruption of manners and morals, but it was especially startling to those who knew the country intimately, as I did, before 1914, when officials were uncorruptible and the standards of decency as high as in England.

Now that the policy of armed risings had failed, the internal organization of the Communist Party was thoroughly overhauled. Three of its centres were directly dependent on Moscow:

- (1) The German Communist Party.
- (2) The Young Communist Union.
- (3) The Red Front Fighters League.

The latter had been declared illegal by the Government, but existed none the less, meeting regularly at secret rendezvous. A round dozen other organizations were camouflaged auxiliaries of the Communist Party:

- (1) The Revolutionary Trade Union Opposition.
- (2) The German Red Help.
- (3) The International Red Help.
- (4) The Union of German Proletarian Free-Thinkers.
- (5) The Union of Proletarian Sexual Reform.
- (6) The League against War and Fascism.
- (7) The Red Pioneers.

- (8) The Union of Unemployed Proletarians.
- (9) The Anti-Imperialist League.
- (10) The Union of Red Sportsmen.
- (11) The Red Cultural Union.
- (12) The Reich Peasants Union.

Newspapers supporting the movement included *International Press Correspondence*, *The Red Flag*, and *The Red Front*. More than a dozen Communist newspapers were published in provincial centres. From January, 1929, to June, 1931, a period of two and a half years, 41 editors of these publications were tried and convicted of high treason by the then very lenient and certainly non-Nazi courts of Germany.

Communist activity was not limited to the masses of the electorate: it penetrated also the army, navy, and police forces. In the year 1932 there was a monthly average of 40 cases of incitement to disaffection in the Army, and 74 in the Police. Accused were generally charged with the distribution of subversive literature, for attempts to reach the Forces by personal contact were almost impossible to prove.

Preparations made by the Communists for a second armed rising in 1932 were well planned and nation-wide. Starving men and women were looting provision shops. Strikes and riots succeeded each other with monotonous regularity. There were 7,000,000 unemployed.

"The central question of the rising is the arming of the proletariat," wrote Hans Kippenberger, *alias* A. Langer.* (I have slightly abbreviated his redundant sentences, without altering their meaning.) "The question of arms must be solved by the masses themselves. One could add indefinitely to Lenin's list of primitive weapons available to the prole-

* *Der bewaffnete Aufstand*, by Hans Kippenberger. Geneva, 1931.

tariat: to 'knives, knuckle-dusters, rags soaked in petrol' one could add 'axes, bricks, boiling water to pour on the bestial police raging in the working-class quarters, and simple hand-grenades of dynamite,' to mention only the most primitive of the almost infinite possibilities available everywhere.

"It is proletarians who work in chemical factories and in mines, who handle poison gases and explosives, and transport on the railways and waterways the bourgeoisie's instruments of murder: if they make use of these possibilities for the sake of their freedom they are only doing their duty."

At this time the Communist Party had spies and saboteurs in all the major industries of the country, a courier-service to Moscow, complete with cyphers, passport-forging establishments, friendly customs-officials, and concealed stocks of dynamite, incendiary material and weapons in all the principal cities of Germany. Certainly the time was ripe for a bid for power.

The National-Socialist Party, on the other hand, had reached a difficult point in its evolution. In July, 1932, it had obtained 230 seats in the Reichstag, but in the November elections it lost 34 seats, whereas the Communists gained 11. The Communists knew, moreover, that the Nazis were short of funds, and that they themselves could rely on substantial contributions from Moscow.

Terror, scientifically applied, is an invariable prelude to a Communist rising. The Police Commissioner of Berlin made a report on August 10th, 1931, with regard to the murder of three inspectors and the wounding of three constables in which he stated that "police investigations have proved that in all the above-mentioned cases murders were planned. Communist organizations have made it their task to fight the executive institutions of the State by organized assassination."

Subsequent investigations have proved that the Police Commissioner was right. The following table shows the

casualties suffered by police who came into conflict with the Communists in the course of their duties :

In 1928	Communists	murdered	1	policeman	and injured	66
" 1929	"	"		no policemen	"	145
" 1930	"	"		1 policeman	"	274
" 1931	"	"		7 policemen	"	332
" 1932	"	"		2 "	"	304

With regard to attacks on political opponents, the rising tide of murdered Nazis tells its own story :

In 1928	Communists	murdered	5	Nazis	and injured	360
" 1929	"	"		8 "	"	881
" 1930	"	"		15 "	"	2,506
" 1931	"	"		32 "	"	6,307
" 1932	"	"		68 "	"	9,715

In five years, therefore, 128 Nazis were killed and 19,769 injured. Each year the Communist murders and assaults increased. It is true that there were similar mounting casualties on the Communist side. "*Cet animal est très méchant . . .*"

There is an unfortunately common type of Englishman—a product of our insularity, I suppose—who says of revolutionaries: "There's nothing to choose between them: both sides adopted violent methods." If someone hit my complacent countryman in the eye, or tried to pick his pocket, he would probably resist and retaliate, and he would certainly resent the attitude of mind of a spectator who watched the progress of the fight from afar and declared that people who brawled like that ought really to be locked up.

The people who began the brawling in Europe were the Communists. In Russia they had excuse for their original actions, but in Germany, under the democratic Weimar Republic, Communism could have won the votes that National Socialism won had it been the will of the people to renounce Christianity and adopt the gospel of Marx.

It was not the will of the people as the following table clearly shows :

	<i>Nazi Votes.</i>	<i>Nazi Seats.</i>	<i>Communist Votes.</i>	<i>Communist Seats.</i>	<i>Other Parties' Votes.</i>	<i>Other Parties' Seats.</i>
Reichstag Election, May 4, 1924 ...	1,918,329	32	3,693,280	62	23,670,189	378
Reichstag Election, Dec. 7, 1924 ...	907,915	15	2,711,829	45	26,692,191	435
Reichstag Election, May 20, 1928 ...	810,127	12	3,264,793	54	26,678,327	424
Reichstag Election, Sept. 14, 1930 ...	6,409,610	107	4,592,090	77	23,969,157	393
Reichstag Election, July 31, 1932 ...	13,779,017	230	5,369,708	89	17,733,629	289
Reichstag Election, Nov. 6, 1932 ...	11,737,395	196	5,980,614	100	17,752,779	288
Reichstag Election, Mar. 5, 1933 ...	17,277,328	288	4,847,939	81	17,218,035	278
Nazi Plebiscite, Nov. 12, 1933 ...	"Yes" votes 40,633,852	—	"No" votes 2,101,207	—	—	—
Nazi Plebiscite, Aug. 19, 1934	38,394,848	—	4,300,370	—	—	—
Nazi Plebiscite on the Anschluss, April 10, 1938 :						
In the Old Reich ...	44,451,401	—	442,981	—	—	—
In Austria ...	4,453,772	—	11,929	—	—	—

Although Germany definitely turned against Communism in 1930, preparations to force it upon the German people went forward vigorously, even after Hitler had been nominated Chancellor, on January 30, 1933. A few

of these plots are given below, because the memories of the friends of Communism are very short:

On February 13th, 1932, at a meeting of Communist leaders at Aue, in Saxony, it was stated that "big things will happen shortly," and arms were issued to members of the Red Army.

On February 15th, 1932, the police in Flensburg received information that armed groups, provided with explosives, had been formed from the worst characters in Hamburg for the purpose of setting fire to buildings and blowing up bridges. Inscriptions appeared on the walls: "Workers, arm yourselves!"

On February 17th, 1932, the police in the Ruhr district learned that terrorist groups of Communists were about to attack various railway-stations and municipalities.

On February 18th, 1932, in Cammin, Pomerania, the police discovered a plan in cypher for an armed rising. Led by a bricklayer, 25 men were to capture leading citizens and hold them as hostages. Public buildings were to be occupied, and railway bridges destroyed.

A similar terrorist group was discovered at Burscheid, where nearly a hundredweight of dynamite was confiscated.

In Herdecke, Schwerte, and Hagen, 43 Communists were arrested, in possession of 7 rifles, 42 pistols, 8 bombs, and other explosive material.

Between July, 1931, and December, 1932, a period of eighteen months, 111 cases of high treason were proved against the Communists in the German Courts.

From all parts of the country came news of an impending Communist revolt; indeed, the Comintern had openly boasted of its preparations, and that it had inspired strikes and street-fighting. In Altona, Communist groups paraded the streets armed with knives, daggers, and bottles of sulphuric acid, giving the clenched-fist salute. The memory of the bloody Sunday of Altona, on July 17th, 1932, when 17 people were killed and over 50 wounded, was still fresh in the minds of the inhabitants. In Hanover preparations for revolution were well advanced: 100,000 detonators and large quantities of explosives had been stolen from a forester's house, and the rising was fixed for the day that Adolf Hitler was to assume office.

Any of these conspiracies, or all of them together, would have provided a starting-point for the severe repressive measures which the National Socialist Government, in office only since January 30th, 1933, had undoubtedly determined to take against the Communists, when the Reichstag caught fire mysteriously on the night of February 27th.

Doubtless the Reichstag fire was a good opportunity for the National Socialists to have done with their chief opponents, but a little consideration of the circumstances under which it was burned reveals many awkward flaws in the theory, so commonly held in England, that the Nazis set fire to the building themselves.

First, why should they have troubled to burn down the Reichstag? Their opponents had destroyed many other buildings, and were planning further arson. They had ample proof of Communist conspiracies in all parts of Germany, and were under no necessity to invent or manufacture evidence against their enemies.

Secondly, if they had planned the burning of the Reichstag, would they have made use of a short-sighted and semi-idiotic boy such as van der Lubbe, the principal accused?

At the trial van der Lubbe admitted having been in the company of Nazis as well as Communists before the fire. Had the trial been faked, the Nazis would never have put such a witness upon the stand.

But if van der Lubbe did not burn the Reichstag, who did? He confessed to the crime, was in possession of fire-lighters, and was proved to have started three other fires. No doubt he must have had accomplices, or been a dupe. If the latter, whose dupe was he? A dupe of the Nazis? We can imagine that the police told Goering that a half-wit boy was preparing to burn the Reichstag, and that he might be helped to do so, secretly, or that another fire

might be started, so that the Communists should be accused of the crime. In that event, what would Goering have done? Surely he would at least have told the police to see that their story led to the Communists. It would have been easy enough to "plant" evidence. Instead, the police arrested four foreigners (van der Lubbe, Dimitrov, Popov, and Tanev, of whom Dimitrov had a perfect alibi, having been in Munich on the night in question), and only one German, Ernst Torgler, the chairman of the German Communist deputies. Had a trial on Stalin's lines been required (to convince the German people, presumably, that Communists are in the habit of burning buildings), then it is hard to suppose that the Nazis would have chosen their victims so badly that the Court acquitted four out of the five accused.

Finally, the fact that a tunnel led from General Goering's house to the Reichstag is proof of Nazi innocence, not guilt. Why should the Nazis, had they been going to commit arson, have used such a clumsy means of approach as an underground passage leading to the house of one of their leaders? Goering had all the resources of the State behind him. He had no need of a secret passage. He would not have given orders likely to incriminate himself. Yet unless we accuse him personally, or other high Nazi officials, we cannot reasonably accuse anybody in the Party. If we suggest that subordinates gave the orders, we are left with the assumption that junior officials planned a huge and entirely unnecessary conspiracy.

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When the French entered the Ruhr in 1923, Hitler nearly won Bavaria to his cause. He failed, but came to bless his reverse, for his party was not yet ready for power.

For ten years longer the struggle continued: between

70,000,000 people who refused to be squeezed like a lemon ("until the pips squeak," as one of our Cabinet Ministers said at the time) and the victorious Powers assembled at Geneva. The mounting indignation of Germans at their treatment is expressed by the rising figures of membership of the National Socialist Party after it was reconstructed on Hitler's release from confinement:

In 1925 the Party had 27,000 members			
" 1926	"	50,000	"
" 1927	"	72,000	"
" 1928	"	108,000	"
" 1929	"	176,426	"
" 1930	"	389,000	"
" 1931	"	806,294	"
" 1932	"	1,414,975	"

As soon as National Socialism was in power there was little further talk of pressure. If any pips squeaked, they were the League of Nations enthusiasts who saw that Geneva could no longer maintain a hegemony over Europe.

Disarmament was in the air in 1933 (during this year, however, the Schneider-Creuzot munition works in France paid a dividend of 25 per cent., and the Skoda Works in Czecho-Slovakia 23 per cent.), but the League of Nations came to the decision that Germany, who had been disarmed for fifteen years, must remain in tutelage for another eight years before the pacific Powers could limit their "defence forces." Thereupon, Germany resolved to win her freedom through force. Her enemies may say that she has never understood any other instrument of policy. Maybe, but we never gave her the chance to do so.

The following year was full of death and disaster. In February, 1934, Chancellor Dollfuss suppressed a Socialist rising with serious bloodshed. In July he was assassinated. In December, King Alexander of Yugoslavia and M.

Barthou were murdered by an assassin in Marscilles. And on June 30th, 1934, the Röhm conspiracy was ruthlessly suppressed in Germany.

Ernst Röhm, Chief of Staff of the Nazi Storm-Troops, was an adventurer of homosexual tendencies, who had a gift for organization, and had become leader of the S.A. (the *Sturm Abteilungen*, Hitler's famous Brown Shirts), which had been raised originally to keep order at Nazi meetings, and had by now become an army of 2,000,000 men. Besides the S.A. there were two other armed and organized bodies in Germany, the S.S. (the *Schutzstaffel*, or Black Shirts, who were a select corps of Nazis, 300,000 strong, charged with the task of upholding the discipline of the movement), and the Reichswehr, the regular army, of 100,000 men, under the command of veteran officers. The S.S. were led by Heinrich Himmler, who distrusted Röhm, and disapproved of his manners, morals, and methods.

Röhm, an able and ambitious man, wanted his S.A. to be merged into the German Army, and its leaders to be given military rank. To this the Reichswehr very naturally objected: the Generals who commanded it did not want a splendidly trained body of men, each one of whom was fit to be an officer, to become a plaything for politicians. Himmler agreed with the Reichswehr, and told Hitler that a plot was being prepared by Röhm to overthrow the régime. The Reichswehr intelligence service confirmed this information.

Röhm was called to Berlin by Hitler in the spring of 1934, and the Chancellor argued with him for more than five hours, not only about the S.A., but about his private life. Röhm returned to Munich in a sulky frame of mind.

How dangerous was he? Did he really intend to have Hitler killed? If so, the orgy at which he was afterwards

surprised is difficult to explain. Nevertheless it is most unlikely that both the S.S. and the Reichswehr should have been misinformed about a matter so vital to their interests as a conspiracy in the ranks of the Brown Shirts. If a dangerous movement was afoot, as they alleged, then Hitler was compelled to act quickly, otherwise there would have been chaos in Germany, with 2,000,000 men swinging this way and that under the influence of divided leaders.

On the night of June 29th, 1934, Hitler flew to Munich, and drove from the airfield, as dawn was breaking, to an hotel some thirty miles away, where Röhm and his followers were surprised at a revel of which the less said the better. They were all arrested, and taken back to Munich under escort.

A revolver was put in Röhm's cell, but he did not use it, having a life insurance in favour of his family which would not have been paid had he committed suicide; so he was shot on the following evening. Meanwhile a clean sweep was made of conspirators in Munich and other parts of Germany. In Berlin, General Schleicher and his wife were killed, as well as General von Bredow, his close friend, and Karl Ernst, a favourite of Röhm's who had become the chief of the Berlin Storm-Troops.

This "blood bath," as it has been termed by the adversaries of the Nazis, involved the death of some 500 persons. More persons have died in other revolutions (even in Palestine) in recent times. Mistakes were made by the Nazis: shocking mistakes. I am not concerned to defend them. Until doomsday critics will pontificate from their arm-chairs, while the pageant of history passes on unheeding.

* * * * *

There was now only one professional army in Germany, the Reichswehr, and each officer and each soldier took a

personal oath of loyalty to Adolf Hitler. He became, and has remained, the undisputed master of Germany.

* * * * *

And what has the master done in his house? For one thing, he has changed the face of Germany. Literally, the face. Kaiser moustaches have vanished: men are now clean-shaven, or wear a clipped upper lip. The roll of fat at the back of German necks is beginning to disappear, and the German paunch of the middle-fifties.

People look happy in this Third Reich, and that, to one who remembers their condition under the Weimar Republic, is really a greater and more important change than the great new motor roads or the great new buildings. People not only look happy: they are healthier.

In Dresden (whither I went to see the superb Sistine Madonna) I spent a morning at the Rudolf Hess Hospital, where Nature Cure methods are being studied.

Herr Hess has had personal experience of Nature Cure methods, and Herr Hitler, as a vegetarian and tectotaller, is also interested; in this hospital a synthesis of old and new ideas in medicine is being attempted. Of course, Nature Cure is as old as Hippocrates, but it is new in the sense that it had been neglected by the orthodox physicians of Germany (as it has been in other countries) with the consequence that until recently (again, as in other countries) more than half the sick people in the Reich were being treated by quacks.

At the head of the Rudolf Hess Hospital is a physician of international repute, Dr. Grote. He is assisted by Dr. Brauchle, who is an expert on fasting, fruit diets, and mud and water treatments. The two work together in perfect harmony.

"We have learned that symptoms have a *meaning*, instead of only a *cause*," Dr. Grote told me. "Scientific

medicine used to treat the causes; now we try to get to the bottom of the trouble. Natural methods of healing are slower than treatment by drugs, and therefore sometimes more disagreeable for the patient, but their results are permanent. For instance, rheumatic complaints can sometimes be made to disappear in two or three days with aspirin: with fasting, on the other hand, the symptoms may continue for two or three weeks, but at the end of that time the patient is really cured. Cured, that is, so long as he does not revert to the habits which caused his body to protest."

The Rudolf Hess Hospital is always full to capacity—1,100 beds—and it is being extended. Two thousand Nazi nursing sisters are learning Nature Cure. (By the cot of one of them I saw Dr. Rosenberg's abstruse *Blut und Erbe*, a strange bedside book!) Dr. Grote and Dr. Brauchle give ten post-graduate courses a year, so that each year some 600 doctors from all over the Reich have the benefit of their experience and researches. More than 76,000 physiological analyses were made last year, and Dr. Grote has no doubt that when the records are collated and published an important contribution will be made to the practice of medicine.

In Berlin there is another great Nature Cure Hospital, managed on lines similar to that at Dresden. It would be wrong to give the impression that all Germany is interested in Nature Cure, but it is fair to say that the Government is encouraging a movement to bring the people back to the curative powers latent in the individual, instead of relying on medicines alien to the body. And this, of course, is in line with the political philosophy of National Socialism.

The Strength through Joy movement is another, much larger, and far better known aspect of the same principle (with its Platonic echo) of securing harmony between the inner and the outer man.

Dr. Ley, the leader of the Labour Front (its membership to-day is 21,000,000), organized the K.d.F. (*Kraft durch Freude*) in order to bring opportunities of recreation to the working classes at the cheapest possible rates. It was an attempt to interest people who had never before had much opportunity for enjoyment in sport, games, and travel. Dr. Ley wished not only to help in building up a healthy nation, but also to increase real wages by providing opportunities for enjoying leisure in forms hitherto reserved for a privileged class. The success of his movement was immediate, and astonished even the Nazis themselves.

To-day K.d.F. holidays are planned for 11,000,000 workers a year, at a cost which varies from £1 to £1 10s. a week. Thousands of small theatres—and some huge ones—are devoted to amateur theatricals: in 1937 no less than 480,000 K.d.F. plays were performed, attended by 22,000,000 people.

Many millions of German workers have learned to play games for the first time in their lives. Hundreds of thousands have visited foreign countries for the first time. The K.d.F. owns four and charters five large ocean-going steamers for its workers' cruises, which went to Norway, Madeira, the Azores, Italy, and Africa last year.

German women—especially of the working classes—are far better dressed and better shod than they used to be. Contrary to the general belief in England, make-up is not frowned upon by National Socialism, provided it is used in moderation. The Führer is very interested in feminine fashions, and encourages women to dress smartly. Although himself simple to the point of asceticism, he likes those around him to enjoy themselves with music and song and wine.

With regard to unemployment, the Nazis have a proud record. Would that we could emulate it! What would

restriction of liberty matter, if that were necessary, provided we could end the sufferings of these patient millions of our people, denied their birthright of work! In January, 1933, there were 7,000,000 unemployed in Germany. To-day there are 456,000 unemployed registered in the Old Reich, 150,000 in Austria, and 218,000 in the Sudetenland. These figures are an understatement of the true position. There are, in fact, no able-bodied unemployed anywhere in Greater Germany: those shown as unemployed are persons engaged in seasonal occupations (covered by insurance) or the sick. The number of employed persons in Greater Germany has risen from 12,000,000 in 1932 to 20,820,000 in 1938.

At present Germans work long hours for small wages, but the standard of living is rising, and their money is worth more than appears from indices of costs, owing to cheap K.d.F. holidays, health services, etc. In the last five years of National Socialism the national income has increased by £2,000,000,000, and Savings Bank deposits by £500,000,000. (In France, Savings Bank deposits have dropped by £100,000,000 in the same period.) Capital returns, based on 1,400 industrial concerns, have risen from a deficit of 4·8 per cent. in 1932 to a dividend average of 6·5 per cent. in 1938. Hundreds of thousands of acres of waste land have been reclaimed. Factory conditions have been improved until they are now the best in the world. More than 700,000 Nazi radio sets have been made, at a cost of 35s. each. A car—the People's Car—will soon be on the market costing £40: buyers will be able to acquire it on a small initial payment and weekly instalments which cover insurance.

But the greatest successes of National Socialism have been won in the sphere of social service. German homes have always been the tidiest in the world, and even when the owners did not have enough to eat—in the 'twenties—

they would still find some flowers for their window-boxes. But under National Socialism the poor are the constant and personal concern of all the members of the party. Mutterschule, Volkswohlfahrt, and Winterhilfswerke (Schools for Housewives, the Well-Being of the People, and the Winter Help Work) are nation-wide organizations supported by the whole weight of the hierarchy. Field-Marshal Goering, Herren Hess, Goebbels, Himmler, and all the Nazi chiefs inaugurate the Winter Help Work by collecting in the streets; and every other Sunday throughout Germany a meal is served in all homes and restaurants, consisting of a single dish, the balance being given to charity. Thirty-four million pounds sterling were collected in 1937, and more than 3,000,000 poor children were given Christmas hampers. In November, 1938, £50,000 were collected in the streets in a single day and sent to relieve distress in the Sudetenland.

In Munich, out of a population of 850,000, there are 20,000 unpaid social service workers. The smallest group in the Winter Help Work contains about thirty people. It is supervised by a group leader, who knows his people intimately. The group leader reports to a circle leader, and the circle leader to a district leader, who has a card-index of every householder in his district. Help is distributed irrespective of political conditions, except that the Jews have their own relief organization.

There is no eyewash and no over-organization (so common in Germany) in these distributing centres. Everyone is in plain clothes. There are well-filled rooms for provisions, others for clothes and medicines, and a special room is stacked high with Christmas presents. Quickly and smoothly the applicants receive their packets of sugar, their coffee or firewood, or try on boots or choose scarves or underwear. There was no Nazi propaganda in the distributing centres I visited.

Weekly visits are paid by the social workers to richer citizens, who are asked to contribute what they can, if not in money, then in kind—old clothes, old boots, or fruits from the garden. Last year the sportsmen of Munich contributed £1,500 worth of game to the poor of the city. Three thousand old people had free meals throughout the winter.

Below the pageantry and pyrotechnics of National Socialism there is a solid basis of common sense; also of Christianity, though this is vehemently denied by some persons otherwise friendly to the Third Reich.

Undoubtedly there is a small pagan section of the National Socialist Party, but it does not enjoy much influence. Herr Hitler himself, and the bulk of his followers, are anxious to keep on good terms with all Christian denominations.

For centuries the Protestant churches of the Reformation have quarrelled amongst themselves. They are still at sixes and sevens. Nowadays the majority of German Protestants—*i.e.*, members of the Evangelical Church—accept National Socialism, and carry on their religious duties unmolested by the State, provided that they do not discuss politics. But there are extremist sections of Protestants, both pro-Nazi and anti-Nazi. The German Christians, Hitler's active supporters, claim that he is a new authority on what Christianity really is. They consider that "the primary assumptions of the State as it is to-day—those of Race, Blood, and Soil—are sacrosanct," and that "everything which National Socialism is now doing for the community is the will of God." These people are a numerous and influential body of Christian men and women. Their convictions may seem strange to us, but they are sincere.

On the other side there is the anti-Nazi Confessional Church (a smaller body than the German Christians, but

no less devout), which holds to the Lutheran doctrine that man is born in sin, and that the State is liable to error. To this Church belongs Dr. Martin Niemöller, of Dahlem, the former submarine commander who sank 50,000 tons of Allied shipping during the Great War, and his brother, Pastor Niemöller, of Bielefeld. Dr. Martin Niemöller is one of the most eloquent and respected of the religious opponents of National Socialism. He was arrested last year on the charge of having called Hitler "a fool" in a public sermon, and convicted, but released, as he had already been in prison for a time longer than his sentence. However, he was immediately re-arrested—*i.e.*, taken into "protective custody"—because he would not give a promise not to criticize the head of the German State in future.

Too much fuss has been made abroad about Dr. Martin Niemöller. I agree with the Bishop of Gloucester, who wrote: "He was a man whose record of service commended him to the authorities, and his resistance was for some time passed over. He might, I am told, be released at once if he would undertake to avoid using his pulpit for political purposes. Even in this country we do not like political sermons, and are doubtful whether they benefit the Christian Church." Surely most of us agree that the head of a State should be left out of political controversy, except in very exceptional circumstances. In England this is a strongly held opinion: there is a tacit agreement amongst us not to criticize the King.

Wherever I went in Germany I saw both Protestant and Roman Catholic churches well attended. Religion is freely practised and preached; to compare the situation in Germany to that of Soviet Russia or the recent state of Soviet Spain is completely ridiculous. Even in Turkey, which claims to be a democratic country, priests are forbidden to appear in public in their customary dress. Such

restrictions are unknown in Germany, whose Leader has declared that Christianity is the basis of the moral system of National Socialism. Moreover, the German State has supported all efforts of the Evangelical Church to create unity in its ranks, and has financed it, as in the past, to the extent of £2,500,000 a year, as well as collecting taxes for it amounting to £5,000,000 a year. (It has done the same for the Roman Catholic Church.)

As regards the Roman Catholics, there is nothing new in a quarrel between spiritual and temporal powers in Germany. Bismarck put a cardinal and six bishops into prison during the *Kulturkampf* of the nineteenth century. To-day, although nothing so drastic has been done by Hitler, the situation is difficult and strained because of the National Socialist claim to be the sole preceptor of German youth. "No obstacle will ever be placed in the way of religious instruction in the schools," Reichsminister Kerrl has declared, "but we must leave it to the State to educate German children in other fields." Here is the crux of the quarrel.

Cardinal von Faulhauber, Bishop of Munich, and Count Preysing, the Bishop of Berlin, are the chief opponents of National Socialism. A durable understanding between the Vatican City and Berlin will be difficult, but not impossible; in Italy the different spheres of Church and State are recognized, and a *modus vivendi* has been found, although the last Pope sometimes criticized Signor Mussolini's actions with severity. No doubt Pope Pius XII will do the same.

Agreement on fundamentals will be impossible, for most Christians will disagree with Reichsminister Kerrl that "Christ led a bitter struggle against Judaism, and for that reason He was crucified by the Jews. The teaching of Christ Himself does not in any way contradict National Socialism." But it is not impossible for Chris-

tians to live together in peace, in spite of unbridgeable divisions of opinion.

In a labour camp in the neighbourhood of Berlin I asked whether the boys could go to church on Sunday. I was told that they could, and that they could use their Government bicycles for the purpose. How many went? I enquired. Very few, my informant replied, for the nearest church was five miles away. No church service of any kind was held at the camp; the very suggestion seemed to cause surprise.

At Sonthofen, one of the universities for the leaders of the future, I was told that good National Socialists show forth their religion by their works, and that church-going was not encouraged, although not condemned. So also at a training school for women leaders at Potsdam (an important institution attended by girls from all over the Reich, and visited by Dr. Goebbels as often as once a month) the headmistress politely, but definitely, refused to answer questions concerning church attendance. She said that such matters did not concern her. The girls were free to do what they liked in private. They did not go to church during their three weeks' course because they were too busy. The day began with hoisting the flag at the bottom of the lawn and the reading of a sentence or two from *Mein Kampf*.

Amazing as this neglect of Christian worship seems to me, and sure as I am that I shall be attacked for my opinion, I declare my honest conviction that there is more real Christianity in Germany to-day than there ever was under the Weimar Republic.

* * * * *

The educational schemes of the National Socialist Party are vast in scope, sometimes overlap each other, and are frequently described by compound words as long as those

given by the Sanskrit sages of antiquity to their philosophies, so that it is not easy to give a clear outline of them in small compass; but they have a common denominator in the desire to develop character, honesty, and energy rather than the mental agility which gives success under a system of free business enterprise.

Through the Hitler Youth, Labour Camps, Labour Front, Adolf Hitler Schools, and the Nazionalpolitischen-erziehungsanstalt ("Napoli" to its friends), which gives a special political education to promising boys in fifteen schools (ten of them in Prussia), the ideal of *mens sana in corpore sano* is being inculcated throughout the Reich with Teutonic thoroughness.

Every German boy must join the Hitler Youth at the age of ten. At fourteen he may have finished his schooling and be apprenticed to a trade. The Party still claims him on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons, and through the Reichsberufwettkampf (National Competition for Apprentices, in which 2,700,000 lads of all trades compete for yearly prizes, and the honour of being presented to the Führer) it keeps a tally on his technical skill. At eighteen he goes to a labour camp for six months. At nineteen, or thereabouts, the Army claims him for two years. From childhood until he returns to his work at the age of twenty-one or twenty-two he is organized, weighed, measured, card-indexed, drilled.

* * * * *

The Adolf Hitler Schools, of which there are to be thirty-two, one for each political district, are special schools for promising boys, to train them to the tasks of government.

Each boy (chosen by the local Youth Leaders) must be twelve years of age, Aryan, and born of parents who are good Nazis. The "entrance examination" consists of

being kept in an Adolf Hitler School for a week, during which time he is tested in qualities such as courage, strength, and mental capacity. One of the tests for courage, which I witnessed, was to jump from a fifteen-foot diving-board into a pool. All the boys, even those who could not swim, jumped obediently enough.

What scope—the thought flashed through my mind more than once—is there for a stubborn little devil under Nazism or Fascism? Would Hitler or Mussolini have been prize-winners in their own schools? It is true that no system can legislate for genius, but I wonder whether the German plan makes sufficient allowance for the characters that cannot be poured into a common mould?

These Adolf Hitler schoolboys, selected from all classes and ranks—the cream of the nation's male youth—undergo their special training at the cost of the State. Special emphasis is laid on team games, and sports such as riding, swimming, rowing, fencing, boxing. English is the first foreign language taught. Once a year each boy goes either to a miner's home for three weeks, where he works in the pit, or to a farm to help in the harvest. Book work is not neglected, but it is all permeated by the didactic National Socialist outlook.

From the Hitler Schools the boys go directly to a labour camp, where they almost automatically become leaders, owing to their special training, and then to their two years' military service, which they complete by the age of twenty-one.

Each year, then, some 4,000 lads of special ability will enter the life of the nation. Some will have professions ready for them, others will find their own particular niche; and all, it is hoped, will choose for themselves a suitable eugenic mate. Those who do not do so will probably have little chance of advancement in the National Socialist Party.

Three years later, when these men are twenty-four, a selection of 1,000 will be made, who will be offered a further course of training at the Castles of the National Socialist Order, to fit them for high administrative posts. Some will have already embarked upon their careers, but it will be easy to select a thousand hand-picked men for Government service. Their three years of civilian life will have given them experience hardly to be acquired by graduates for the Civil Service in other countries.

The three Castles are: Burg Crössensee in Pomerania, Burg Vogelsang in the Rhineland, and Burg Sonthofen in the Bavarian Alps. The chosen thousand will spend a year at each castle, and will then attend a further course of theoretical training for six months at Chiemsee in the Alps, under the direct supervision of Dr. Rosenberg, finally emerging as national leaders at the age of twenty-nine or thereabouts.

More than forty million marks—say, £2,000,000—have been spent on building Burg Sonthofen, which is set in glorious surroundings amidst the peaks of the Allgau. An immense swimming bath is being built, a huge riding school and gymnasium, football fields, ranges, open-air jumping schools, etc. Examinations are reduced to a minimum. One of the instructors told me that he judged his students largely by how they behaved when ski-ing, which he considered more important than scholarship.

The same emphasis on sport exists at Toelz, near Munich, a "finishing school" for future leaders of the S.S., where two hundred young men undergo an eight months' course to fit them to become chiefs in the Schutzstaffel.

No expense has been spared to give the students beautiful rooms for their work and play. When I commented on the luxurious surroundings, I was told that the majority of the pupils come from poor homes, where the graces

and amenities of life are unknown; by surrounding them with comfort and accustoming them to beauty the Nazis will be able to raise the general standard of life in Germany. Nor, it was explained to me, is there any danger of their becoming soft under the discipline which prevails, and this I can well believe. The emphasis is laid heavily on character and courage. In students' rooms I saw pictures of *samurai*, Everest climbers, adventurers. . . .

The future will show what these experiments produce in leadership. In the old days the Germans were too academic and theoretical. Now the pendulum has swung in an opposite—and an English—direction.

* * * * *

The pillars of the Nazi world-outlook are Work and Brotherhood. Nowhere can this be better seen than in the Labour Camps, in which every German boy of eighteen, of Aryan parentage, must serve for six months. The number of boys in the 1,600 camps in Germany varies from 50 to 300; each year 150,000 pass through the training.

During the October to April course as many agricultural labourers as possible are taken, so that they may be free to work on their farms in summer. Clerks and students generally attend the summer course, from May to September. No exceptions are made, except for severe physical disability, and it is claimed that poets and artists have benefited greatly by a life of camps. No doubt this is true: Dante and Gibbon were troopers in their time.

The boys rise at five in summer, and six in winter, do gymnastic exercises for half an hour, tidy their rooms, wash, breakfast.

Five hours of manual labour follows: often an hour is spent in bicycling to their work, and an hour back, so that they are often away from their camp for seven or eight

hours. Dinner is served between two and three o'clock in the afternoon, when the staff and boys sit down together to a substantial meal. We are told sometimes that the Germans are half starved. What nonsense! They have insufficient butter and other luxuries, but their meals are sound and satisfying. I have enjoyed several dinners in Labour Camps: kidney soup, beef, sauerkraut, potatoes, and delicious little wild mushrooms is a fair average sample of the boys' fare.

Very few punishments are necessary (confinement to barracks and stoppage of leave are the most common), because the boys know that the report of the Camp Commandant will greatly influence their future. No corporal punishment is allowed. Any kind of "fagging" is strictly forbidden.

I examined the medical cards of a dozen boys in one camp: all had gained in weight, some as much as 20 lbs. in five months. Loss of weight is immediately reported to the Camp Commandant. Special squads are formed for weak boys.

Each boy costs the State nearly two shillings a day: he receives 2½d. a day pocket money, and all his clothes and food. His own clothes are sent home immediately on arrival, and to prevent class distinctions no boy is allowed to receive more than 5s. a week from his parents, as a maximum.

I talked to six lads, ankle-deep in mud, near Bernau, on the outskirts of Berlin, where they were draining a marsh. Two were students from Munich, two were labourers from East Prussia, one was an apprentice in a steel works at Stuttgart, one the son of an engineer in Cairo. (They came from widely scattered districts, for the Nazis like to keep people travelling, in order that they may learn to know each other and their country.) Anyone who sees these boys, as motorists through Germany can hardly fail

to do, bicycling back to their camps, thickly coated and gloved in winter, half-naked and bronzed in summer, singing as only Germans can, will recognize that here is joyous youth, proud of its tasks, and believing in their motto: "Work ennobles."

The best camp I saw was near Field-Marshal Goering's country estate. It has been made almost entirely by the boys themselves; door handles and brackets as well as walls and roofs. The houses are on the border of the lovely Lake Werbellinsee. Most rooms have some such motto as "*die Heimat ist Mutter deines Lebens, vergiss das nie*" (Don't forget that your country is the mother of your life), or "*Du bist nichts, dein Volk ist alles*" (You are nothing, your people everything). Pine forests come to the very doors of the camp. Across the steel-grey water rises a range of purple hills. Here is ski-ing, fishing, canoeing, climbing, to vary the hard work of forestry; I imagine life here must be a revelation to the town-bred boy. The air is like champagne.

Labour Camps for girls are at present on a voluntary basis, but are soon to be compulsory: they have an average membership of 25,000 each summer. Although they are under the same administration, their work is entirely different. The girls go into the peasants' homes to help the wives of the farmers, look after children, milk cows, and keep the home tidy. In the process they learn much of life as well as of agriculture.

"Girls from cities, factories, and offices," says Frau Gertrud Scholtz-Klink, the leader of the German Women's Labour Service, "who formerly sat reading novels and who thought only of themselves, are now led back to the soil. They learn responsibility. In husbandry there is no shirking, the work is predominant, it stands before the individual 'I,' because if it is not completed, it takes revenge: the grain and turnips rot, and the people go hungry.

"The reality so necessary to life, which makes us unselfish

because we know that we must concentrate on a certain purpose, is growing spontaneously in our young people. In this life in the countryside one notices that service to a great cause begins with very small things."

* * * * *

"The greatest part of our revolution," Herr Hitler said at the Nuremberg conference, "has taken place in our national and racial hygiene. We shall create a new man. Come and see for yourselves whether the Germans have improved or deteriorated under National-Socialist government! Do not take into account simply the increased birth-rate figures,* but notice the improved appearance of our young people. How fine our boys and girls look, how their eyes sparkle, how fresh and vigorous is their carriage, what perfect bodies these millions possess!"

I saw the parade of the Labour Corps on a sunny September morning at Nuremberg. Line upon line of boys in field-grey came swinging into the arena (the Zeppelin-weise) behind sergeant-majors with glinting, twirling maces. In all, there were 38,000 of them, representative of the 150,000 in camps throughout Germany. They were not soldiers, for they had not yet begun their military training, and the longest time that any of them had been drilled was five months, yet already they kept their alignment like veterans. They were dressed in marching order, with heavy packs and black top boots: at a word of command their knees stiffened, and they goose-stepped past their Leader to the ruffle and flam of drums.

* While unemployment rose under the Weimar Republic, the birth-rate fell. National Socialism has reversed the process sharply. Unemployment does not exist, and the birth-rate has risen from 14·7 per 1,000 in 1933 to 18·8 per 1,000 in 1937. No other country in Europe can show such a large increase, which is due in part to special marriage allowances, etc., but chiefly to greater social security and self-confidence.

It was magnificent, and it certainly was not war, for they carried polished spades instead of rifles.

In the centre of the Zeppelinweise stood a sort of altar, carrying a spade and crossed sheaves. After passing the saluting base, each unit wheeled into its place in the arena. The last 3,000 marchers were stripped to the waist, and brought new colour to the scene with their tanned bodies, contrasting with the grey uniforms and the steel of spades. Finally, detachments of the Women's Labour Service marched past Hitler and formed two circles, each round a tall mast. To a roll of drums they broke the flags of Germany and of the National Labour Service.

Now a giant voice addressed us through a thousand loud speakers: "*Führer, see us, we are thy Germany!*"

*Wir sind die Fahnenträger
Der neuen Zeit!*

We are the standard bearers
Of the new age!
We have become one people
Through his hand;
He drew us together
Into the Fatherland!
God bless the work and our beginnings,
God bless the Leader and these times!

Herr Hitler left the long, low, black Mercédès car in which he had been standing for three hours at the salute, and mounted the tribune. While he spoke I thought of an old photograph I had seen of him as a soldier, in 1914, sunken-cheeked, haggard, with a heavy moustache; and another as an unknown agitator in Munich, in 1920, pale, thin, standing in the snow in very thin shoes and shabby overcoat, talking to a few dozen listeners; and again, in 1933, still pale and thin, with a wisp of hair tumbling over his burning eyes, a hard-bitten, hard-worked man,

living on his nerves. To-day he has grown a little stouter, his face is sunburnt, his voice clear and strong, with the familiar rasp when he is stirred.

"Fellow-workers, men and women, party-comrades," he begins. "In these few years you have become a part of our people. You belong to this place. You will always remain. Generation after generation of you will shoulder the spade, the weapon of peace, and will march with it in the service of the people. It is a joy for me to know that through you has been created a new guarantee of the eternal strength of Germany." (*A thunder of Heils! The applause comes in wave after wave to the speaker's tribune. It is more than a minute before he can continue.*)

And so on. Hardly a sentence that is not greeted with rapture. A hundred thousand would-be spectators have not been able to get into the arena—there are 200,000 of us here—and must listen to loud-speakers outside. The road to Nürnberg is lined with men and women eager to greet the Führer. Another multitude awaits him in the city. It is the same all day, and every day, throughout this week of festival.

* * * * *

Dawn broke rainily on the last day. In Bamberg, where I lived, 5,000 Labour Service girls trudged past my hotel to the station. Their flaxen heads were wet; they carried numerous parcels and quantities of gear in their heavy packs, and some led children by the hand—the children of their hosts—so that they might see the trains go; all were tired, but their spirits rose above the depressing morning, and they were singing lustily:

We keep without scathe
Our love and our faith
In Germany glorious,
Happy, victorious!

Yes, the boys and girls of Germany are a fine sight. (No finer than our own youth would be if it had a chance to organize itself.) And a heartening sight, for unless Herr Hitler were mad, which I hope he is not, he will turn all this faith and fervour to good account.

But to an Englishman the faith and fervour that Herr Hitler inspires is rather disturbing. It is quite unlike the affection the Italians have for Signor Mussolini. If the latter went mad, Italy would know of it at once. But if Herr Hitler were to make a speech lasting thirteen hours, instead of three, would anybody dare to interrupt him? I think not.

The Anglo-Saxon peoples must not try to impose an economic boycott on Germany unless they wish to drive her to war. The Germans must not try to impose a military domination over Europe, unless they wish to drive us to war. Has either of us reached that point? I do not think so, but there are extremists in both camps.

German ways are not entirely English ways, but we have a great deal in common, and are partly of the same blood. Our boys and girls like German boys and girls instinctively. English is still the first language to be taught in German schools. We must respect this great, disciplined, industrious nation; indeed, we shall continue to respect her even if we have to fight her. That would be stark lunacy, but, alas, this is not an entirely sane world.

CHAPTER VI

THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL

"Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace; where there is hatred let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is despair, hope."

An old Italian prayer, quoted by Mr. Alwyn Parker in *Lloyds Bank Monthly Review* for July, 1937.

IN England, where it is possible to be blind to a great deal that is happening in the world, we have only lately been awakened to the Jewish problem. Even as late as last summer, when I suggested to a friend that there were powerful influences in the British press which kept the public from realizing the gravity of the situation in Palestine, I was told that I was "just a Nazi," and that the Jews had no influence on our public life.

We were lunching in a little restaurant on a hill-top above Rapallo. At an adjacent table I noticed a small, dark young man in spectacles and a fair, handsome girl. I glanced at them, and continued my argument. We became rather heated, for my friend accused me of prejudice and religious intolerance. I answered that he knew nothing about the Jewish question, or rather questions, for there were several, and to grasp these problems as a whole one should talk to a wide variety of Europeans, and see for oneself—for instance—the aspect and surroundings of the Ghetto in Warsaw, and the crypto-Jews of Salonika and Constantinople. Presently the girl pushed her plate away with a gesture of disgust, and began striding about the terrace, waving her arms.

At this point it dawned on me that the people at the next table were Jews. I left soon afterwards, and heard later that they tackled my friend. They were English

Jews, they told him, and had overheard what I was saying. The husband had nearly assaulted me, and the girl could not sit still to hear her race insulted.

No doubt their nerves were on edge, for that day the Italian newspapers were full of new laws against their race, nevertheless their attitude was typical: they considered themselves insulted (whereas I was trying hard to be fair), yet they did not move away, as they might easily have done in the uncrowded restaurant, but remained to continue the argument, as a sufferer irritates an aching tooth.

The Jews should not be surprised or annoyed when they are discussed. The promise of Jehovah to give dominion to His chosen people is a statement in which other races cannot be disinterested, especially as the Jews are obviously chosen in the sense that they are marked by distinctive physical features.

Like so many Englishmen, I have had many Jewish friends. (A common preface, this, I know, to abuse of the Jews; but some of them, I hope, will absolve me from bias in what follows.) One of my Jewish friends, now dead, was a brother-officer in a cavalry regiment. All his relatives fought in the Great War, and four were killed in action. His wife is a Jewess whose family has been settled in England for 300 years, and has made notable contributions to learning; she herself is strongly anti-Zionist and anti-Communist.

In 1929, when I was writing a book, my literary agent, a Jew, took great pains with my work, long before he could have known that it might become a source of profit to him. He sent it to three (more or less) Christian publishers, who refused it, and eventually to Mr. Victor Gollancz, who advertised it so well that it became a "best-seller." In those days Mr. Gollancz was a devout Jew: he may still be for all I know, but if so he must find it hard to

reconcile his religion with the support he gives to Communism.

My American publishers were also Jews in those days. The film of *Bengal Lancer* was financed and produced by Jews. A Jewish stockbroker invested my savings, helped by a Jewish accountant, who grappled with the super-tax assessors. So the Jews have never done me any harm.

It might be well to add here that I am prosaically English on both sides of my family. My father's people came from the uplands of Kirkoswald in Cumberland, where the Browns and the Yeats were farmers. The humble story of their lives can be traced back to 1620 in the parish registers. (Before the seventeenth century people like us are lost to sight in the Civil War.) My last recorded paternal ancestor was a soldier under Cromwell. On my mother's side, the Bellinghams were of Norman blood, and may have come over with the Conqueror: we find them later at Levens Hall, in Lincolnshire, which they gambled away, emigrating to Ireland, but there is not even any traceable Irish blood in my veins, let alone Jewish, for my grandparents and great-grandparents were English and Scots.

The Jews have been treated abominably in many countries, indeed in *all* countries, at some time or other, except China and India, where they do not seem able to prosper. Wherever they have prospered, they have been persecuted.

There must be some reason for this. Alike in the pagan world and in Christendom, the Jews have been considered an arrogant and argumentative race. Even their own Jehovah asked: "How long will this people provoke Me?"

The great majority of Jews, like the great majority of Gentiles, are not bloodthirsty revolutionaries or intoxicated idealists; but I think it is fair to say that they are an unbalanced people. Mentally they are of a revolu-

tionary temperament (even under Moses they whored after strange gods), and materially they have been so badly treated in the last 2,000 years that some of them turn to any cause which would seem to better their lot. Once engaged in such a movement, they are liable to dominate it with their Messianic zeal.

The world hears little of the law-abiding Jews, but the firebrands are always conspicuous, and when a revolutionary situation occurs in any country the Right-Wing Jews tend to be associated in the public mind with the Left-Wing Jews: even in England to-day, where anti-Semitism is increasing, owing to the presence of refugees, the Conservative Samuels and Sassoons are being confused by many people with the Victor Gollanczes and Harold Laskis of the Left.

Is it just, then, to say that there is a Jewish problem at all, since so many Jews are worthy citizens? Is it not rather a Christian problem: how to cure ourselves of intolerance? Many of us in England hold this view, and it has been eloquently advocated by many Jews. I do not share it, because my travels, and my reading of history, have confirmed me in the opinion that, however charming and however capable individuals of the race may be (and however valuable as citizens, when existing only in small numbers), any large gathering of Jews spreads a curious kind of irritation and uneasiness amongst the surrounding Gentiles. This instinctive dislike of Jews *en masse* by other races is a fact, explain it how we may. It has persisted down the ages.

But what is a race? Dean Inge tells us that "the official German doctrine of 'race' and 'blood' is the most grotesque piece of unscientific balderdash ever crammed down the throat of an intelligent people." He tells us that the races of Europe are inextricably mixed, and that the Jews are not a race.

Well, anyone with an eye for faces and a taste for travel can see that racial types do exist. One need not be a scientist to distinguish a Swede from an Italian. Moreover, microscopes have revealed well-defined differences between the hair-structure, skin-texture, shape of ears, nose, mouth, skull, proportion of blood-groups, and age of nubility of the various groups of mankind. It is possible that new racial crosses may be evolved (a French friend once suggested to me that a strain of Jewish blood stimulates the intelligence like a dash of absinthe in a cocktail), but we cannot deny the right of the dictatorship countries to their own views as to how humanity may be bettered.

How far climate, and food, and subtler influences from their native earth have moulded the physical and mental characteristics of the present races of Europe none of us really knows; but we do know that breeding is of immense importance, at any rate in animals. The mating of three Arabian stallions with our English mares produced the English thoroughbred, but more Arabian blood would not improve the race; on the contrary, it would tend (as frequent experiments have proved) to produce lumpy shoulders and lack of speed. Anyone who suggested that the Stud Book was of no importance in racing would be rightly considered a lunatic. Yet the Germans and Italians are ridiculed by our highbrows for taking measures to see that their future leaders shall be of what they consider sound stock!

Certainly it is not as simple to breed men as it is horses, for obvious reasons, but it is not impossible to take precautions. Indeed, precautions are very necessary, as even the most elementary acquaintance with eugenics proves. The Jukes family is rather *vieux jeu*, and there have been more modern and more striking researches into the begetters of the socially unfit; nevertheless, the late Mr. Jukes still stands as an example to all time, to point the

moral that children must be born of sane and healthy parents, and that heredity is at least as important as environment.*

The Germans and Italians are convinced that to cross their stock with Jewish blood is dysgenic, and that it would be disastrous to their future. Whether this theory is right or wrong is immaterial: it is a belief strongly held not only by Germans and Italians, but by the majority of Jews themselves, who dislike mixed marriages. They consider themselves a people apart, believing, as I believe, that generally speaking it is not for man to join those races which God has separated by distinctive characteristics.

I cannot think why it is considered so absurd, unsocial, and unscientific of the Germans to attach importance to preserving the integrity of their blood. It is true that the world desired and described by people who want us all to be managed by a Council in Geneva, with an International Air Force to bomb any people that objects to its decrees, would have to be a mongrelized world in order to be manageable. But no other world. . . .

We ourselves have instinctive racial prejudices, and although our Empire is composed of people of all colours and races, we do not encourage interbreeding in practice.

* Jukes was a lazy vagabond born in rural New York in 1720, whose descendants, by 1915, numbered 2,820 individuals, of whom three-quarters had been paupers, thieves, prostitutes, epileptics, or mental deficients, costing the State incalculable sums for their care and maintenance. Another case that has been the subject of enquiry by American eugenists is that of a soldier in the Revolution who had an affair with a half-witted servant-girl. Some years later he married a woman of good stock; all their children and their descendants, traced through a hundred years, did well in New Jersey. The descendants of the liaison with the half-wit, however, during the same period, produced 480 individuals, of whom 214 were subnormal or unsatisfactory: 143 were feeble-minded, 33 were convicted of sexual offences, 24 were drunkards, 3 were criminals, 3 epileptic, and 8 kept houses of prostitution.

Most of us would be sorry to see our sister married to a Zulu, however noble in character and appearance. Rightly. England would cease to be England if we adulterated our blood excessively with alien strains. The point is so obvious that it ought not to need stating. Unfortunately, we are hypocrites in the matter: we exclude Indians from our clubs, while expecting them to glorify our Empire. Similarly, the Americans deny votes to their 14,000,000 negroes (and lynch them, every now and then), while admonishing the dictatorship countries for their wicked prejudices.

* * * * *

Before turning to the urgent question of Palestine, and the English Jews, let us examine, as briefly as may be, the history of Israel in Russia, Italy, Germany, with a glance at Hungary and France. In Poland, with her 3,500,000 Jews, and in Roumania, with her 900,000, there are also serious difficulties to be faced, similar in essence to those in Germany: only lack of space forbids me from considering them.

* * * * *

In Russia the Jews were persecuted under the Czars, kept within a pale, moved from pillar to post without redress, and for these reasons they were tempted to join forces with any and every liberator. It has always been thus through their history. We cannot be surprised that they soon made common cause with the revolutionaries. They were not Bolsheviki at first. Many were Liberals, others Mensheviki. But after the Revolution, the Jews, like the Christians, had to choose between Communism and death. They chose Communism, and, being mostly literate they soon acquired an influence out of all proportion to their numbers.

In 1917, Lenin was smuggled into the country with four Jews, Leiba Bronstein (*alias* Leon Trotsky), Apfelbaum (*alias* Zinoviev), Rosenfeld (*alias* Kamenev), and Sobelsohn (*alias* Radek), with the help of the Germans and a Jewish banking house in New York, and through the agency of Israel Lazarevitch Helphand, *alias* Parvus, a Russian Jew who made his fortune in Denmark out of German coal.

Karl Marx, the father of Bolshevism, whose real name was Mordecai, was the son of a rabbi in Treves. He hated the Jews, it is true, but then he held most of the human race in scorn, except the Proletariat, with whom he rarely came in contact. Alexander Kerensky, the last President of the Provisional Government before Lenin seized power, was also a Jew.

According to the Rev. George A. Simons, of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Petrograd, out of the 388 members of the first Bolshevik Government which met in Petrograd in December, 1918, no less than 265 were Jews from the Lower East Side of New York City. There were 106 European Jews, one North American negro, and only 16 genuine Russians. Sixteen Russians, a negro, 371 Jews! The president of this collection of aliens was the Jew Zinoviev.

M. Oudendyke, the Dutch Minister in Petrograd, sent a report to the British Government at this time stating that "unless Bolshevism is nipped in the bud immediately it is bound to spread all over Europe, in one form or another, as it is organized and worked by Jews who have no nationality, and whose object it is to destroy the existing order." This report was published as a White Paper by the British Government, but disappeared almost immediately from circulation. When reprinted, the above passage was deleted.

The population of Russia was then (in 1918) 158,400,000, of whom 7,800,000 were Jews. The present population is

about 170,000,000, and probably the same proportion—say 5 per cent.—are Jews. Yet in 1935, in the Central Committee of the Communist Party, consisting of 59 members, 95 per cent. were Jews—*i.e.*, 56 members—while the other three members were married to Jewesses: Stalin, Lobov, and Ossinsky.

Amongst the Ambassadors and Ministers of the U.S.S.R. in 1935 the following were believed to be Jews:

In London: M. Maisky.

In Berlin: M. Suritz.

In Paris: M. Louritz.

In Rome: M. Stein.

In Tokyo: M. Yureneff.

In Ankara: M. Karakhan.

In Brussels: M. Rubinin.

In Oslo: M. Yakoubowich.

In Stockholm: Mme. Kallontai.

In Bucharest: M. Ostrovski.

In Riga: M. Brodovsky.

In Tallin: M. Karski.

In Helsingfors: M. Asmous.

In the same year (1935) the League of Nations Delegation consisted of one Georgian, M. Swanidze, and seven Jews, MM. Litvinov, Rosenberg, Stein, Markus, Brenners, Hirschfeld, Halphand.

At present, with the purges in progress, it is impossible to give the Semitic percentages in the Russian Government. Certain it is that they are very much higher than the percentage of Jews to the population, both in the lower and upper grades of the State service, which means, in Russia, of practically all employment.

During his travels along the border districts of the U.S.S.R., M. Jean Fontenoy* found that 90 per cent. of

* See page 64.

the directors and secretaries of the collective farms he visited were Jews. Field workers received a maximum of 27 days' pay a month: the president and secretary 80 to 90 days' pay a month. The words Communist and Jew were synonymous with the peasants: they thought that the Jews were the rulers of the land.*

In Kremlin circles the two brothers-in-law of Stalin, Lazarus and Moses Kaganovitch, are Ministers of Transport and Heavy Industry respectively; the guard of the Kremlin is confided to the Jewish Colonel Jacob Rappoport; while the concentration camps, with their population of 7,000,000 Russians, are in charge of a Jew, Mendel Kermann, aided by Lazarus Kaman and Semen-Firkin, both Jews. The prisons of the country are governed by the Jew Kairn Apeter. Foreign policy is almost wholly in Jewish hands, beginning with that man of many *aliases*, M. Meyer Moses Polyanski, *alias* Enock Finkelstein, *alias* Gustav Graf, *alias* Buchmann, Harrison, Maximovitch, Wallach, Beer, and Litvinov, the Foreign Minister of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, at whose breakfast-table Mr. Eden found pats of butter stamped with the slogan, "Peace is indivisible." What peace, M. Litvinov may sometimes ask himself, will Russian Jews have in the days to come?

As regards Italy, if we begin with Rome, we may note that after the Temple at Jerusalem had been destroyed by the Romans, and the Table of Shewbread and the Seven-branched Candlestick had been brought to the

* One is reminded of Deuteronomy (vi. 10, 11): "When the Lord thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities which thou buildedst not; and houses full of good things which thou filledst not; and wells digged which thou diggedst not; and vineyards and olive trees which thou plantedst not, when thou shalt have eaten and be full."

Capitol, Numatinus mourned the victory thus: "If only Titus had not destroyed Jerusalem we should have been spared from this Jewish pest, and the conquerors would not have groaned under the yoke of the vanquished."*

In their time, Suetonius, Diodorus, Tacitus, Don Cassius, Pliny, and other distinguished Romans wrote diatribes against the Chosen People as bitter as anything composed by the Spaniards of the past or by the Nazis of to-day.

In A.D. 418, Jews were excluded from military service in the Roman Empire. Subsequently they were protected by the Popes, and, in spite of occasional outbreaks of anti-Semitism (nineteen Jews were burned alive in Siena as late as July 28, 1799), there was little of that bitter hatred from which they suffered elsewhere.

Indeed, in the early years of the Fascist régime one of the most distinguished Ministers of Finance was Signor Guido Jung, a Jew who had been a front-line soldier during the Great War. But, rightly or wrongly, Signor Mussolini came to the conclusion in 1936 that certain Jews of England and the United States took an important part in the attempt to strangle Italy through sanctions. On July 14th, 1938, a group of scientists, under his inspiration, made an official declaration relating to racial problems, of which the following are the main points:

1. Human races exist: they are not abstractions, but concrete realities, consisting of millions of men of similar physical and psychological characteristics, which they inherit and transmit to their heirs.
2. In addition to the great racial groups, there are sub-groups, such as the Nordics, the Mediterraneans, etc.
3. The differences between peoples and nations are due to race, as well as to history, language, and religion.

* *Israel, son passé, son avenir*, by H. de Vries de Heckelingen. Perrin, Paris, 1937.

4. The present population of Italy is of Aryan origin, and its civilization is Aryan.

5. It is false to say that any considerable mass of emigrants entered Italy in historic times. Since the invasion of the Lombards there has been no movement of peoples on Italian soil sufficient to exert racial influence. The 44,000,000 Italians living to-day are descended chiefly from families living in Italy a thousand years ago.

6. The blood heredity which unites the Italians of to-day with those of a thousand years ago has created an Italian race.

7. Racial theory in Italy is purely Italian. Italians and Scandinavians are not the same people; but still more are the Italians completely differentiated from non-European races.

8. There is an absolute differentiation between the peoples of the West Mediterranean and the peoples of the East Mediterranean and African peoples.

9. The Jews do not belong to the Italian race. They are the only people who have never been assimilated on Italian soil, because their racial type is definitely different from that from which the Italians came.

10. The purely European characteristics of the Italian race must never be altered by inter-breeding with non-European races.

This manifesto puzzled public opinion abroad, and led to a bitter speech from the Pope, which was published in the *Osservatore Romano* (the Vatican organ) and four affiliated newspapers. The Government Press did not reply, but a few days later a semi-official communiqué was issued, stating that, although the discussion of racial problems had lain dormant for several years, this was only because more urgent matters had to be solved first.

"Now the conquest of the Empire has brought racial questions to the fore. Ignorance of such problems has led to dramatic and bloody reactions, about which this is not the moment to speak. Other peoples send to the territories of their Empire few and carefully selected administrators, but we intend, in time, and for reasons of absolute necessity, to send millions into Libya and Italian East Africa. To avoid the running sore of hybridism and the creation of a bastard race which is neither European nor African, the severe laws

of Fascism are not enough: we must also create a clear, strong, and self-reliant public opinion.

"Discrimination is not persecution. May these words be heard by the too-many Jews of Italy and other countries who raise their useless lamentations to the sky, and pass, with characteristic rapidity, from the height of pride to the depth of panic. The Fascist Government has no plans for the persecution of Jews, as such.

"According to Jewish statistics (shortly to be checked by a special census) the Jews in Italy number 44,000. Their proportion to the population is therefore one Jew to 1,000 Italians. It is clear that, from now on, the participation of Jews in the life of the State should be, and will be in this proportion. Nobody can contest the right of the Fascist State to come to this decision, least of all the Jews, who have always been—and are now, according to the recent solemn declaration of the Italian rabbis—the apostles of the most totalitarian, unyielding, ferocious, and in some respects admirable racialism. They have always held themselves to belong to another stock and to be of another race. They have always proclaimed themselves to be a 'chosen people' and they have always given proof of their racial solidarity across all the frontiers of the world."

On September 1st a decree law was promulgated forbidding Jews—defined as persons of Jewish parentage on both sides of their family, whatever the religion they profess—from establishing a permanent domicile in Italy. Citizenship conferred on Jews after January 1st, 1919, was revoked. Jews who came to Italy after that date were warned that they must leave the country within six months.

Outside Italy this racial movement was represented as having taken the Italian public by surprise. That was not my impression when living in the country. There is no fanatical anti-Semitism in Italy. In Liguria the people say that it takes three Jews to get the better of one Greek, and three Greeks to outwit a Genoese. On the other hand, even amongst friends who know me well enough to speak freely against Fascism when so disposed, I found little disapproval of the measures, though individual cases

of hardship were deplored. A new monthly review on racial questions, *La Difesa della Razza*, sold 85,000 copies of its first issue, and 120,000 of the second.

As regards Germany, I must say clearly that I abhor the present treatment of the Jews by the Third Reich; it is horrible, and haunts my conscience whenever I praise the other achievements of the National Socialists, some of which are great and good.

The unfairness of the recent anti-Semitic measures—forbidding a helpless minority to ride bicycles, for instance, to mention only a minor injustice—seems to me, as an Englishman, almost more shocking than the downright maltreatment which the Jews have also suffered. If we see somebody torturing a child, for instance, we are indignant, and it is no excuse to say that it has been tiresome.

Admittedly we cannot adopt the position that we have a greater responsibility to the Jews in Germany than to our own destitute and unemployed. Nevertheless, the way the Germans have treated their Jews is disgusting. They could have been no danger to Germany last year, when they were so shamefully bullied.

Where they are to go, and how, and where, we shall presently discuss. We must first consider the circumstances and causes that have led to their present plight.

Jews were established in the Rhineland in A.D. 368, and seem to have consolidated their position unmolested for four or five hundred years. The era of persecution begins in the ninth century, and continues with increasing frequency and ferocity until the massacres in Cologne, Strasbourg, Augsburg, Wurzburg, Breslau, and Nuremberg in the seventeenth century. In 1717 the inhabitants of Danzig stated that "these wretched people are taking the bread out of our mouths," and there were similar complaints from all parts of Germany. After the French

Revolution, however, matters improved, and continued improving. The first decade of the present century was the golden age of the German Jews, whose immense energy forced an opening into all careers and professions except the military.

"In the midst of German life," wrote Walther Rathenau, once Foreign Minister in the Weimar Republic, and himself a Jew, "is a separated, strange race of people, strikingly clothed, hot-blooded, with animated features: an Asiatic horde on the sand of the Prussian marches. They live in congested groups, foreign organisms in the body of the population. The State has made them citizens and educated them to be Germans, but they have remained foreign."

Foreigners, yet during the Great War 12,000 German Jews died for their country, and 1,500 of them were decorated with the Iron Cross of the First Class.

In October, 1934, Dr. Naumann, President of the Union of National German Jews, declared that his Union "would rather starve with our non-Jewish German compatriots than accept any concessions from those who are engaged in the revengeful boycott against Germany from abroad."

In 1925, when a census of foreign Jews was taken, it was discovered that recent immigrants to Germany consisted of:

35,386	Jews from Poland
9,498	" " Austria
6,986	" " Soviet Russia
3,754	" " Czecho-Slovakia
2,480	" " Hungary
2,156	" " Roumania
1,350	" " Lithuania
6,505	" " other nations

In reality, the total immigration of foreign Jews was greatly in excess of 68,115, because only practising Jews

were registered as such. This invasion from the east, carrying with it Bolshevism in a virulent form, was one that the Germans felt bound to resist, sooner or later. In their exposed geographical position they considered that it was impossible for them to absorb so many foreign elements.

At this time (1925) there were 564,379 German Jews in Germany, chiefly congregated in the larger cities. With the return of the Saar territory there was a further influx. Today, with Austria and the Sudetenland added to the Reich, there are some 600,000 Jews in Germany. Even before the recent edicts their life was being made almost intolerable, and it is hard to explain why 50,000 Polish Jews should have preferred to live there rather than in their native land.

In Berlin in 1931, out of 29 theatrical producers, 23 were Jews. Half the films made were made by Jews, who owned 19 out of 20 production firms. Out of 3,450 lawyers, 1,925 were Jews. Half the doctors were Jews. In Breslau, out of 285 lawyers, 192 were Jews. In Frankfurt, out of 659 lawyers, 432 were Jews. Fifteen Jewish bankers in Germany had 718 directorships. The German Communist presses were controlled by Herren Thalheimer, Meyer, Scholem, Friedlander, all Jews.

In Vienna, where the Jewish problem was even more acute than in other German cities, 85 per cent. of the lawyers were Jewish, 70 per cent. of the dentists, and over 50 per cent. of the physicians and surgeons. The boot and shoe industry was 80 per cent. under Jewish control, newspapers 80 per cent., banks 75 per cent., the wine trade 73 per cent., the cinema 70 per cent., lumber and paper trade 70 per cent., fur and furriers 87 per cent., bakeries 60 per cent., and laundries 60 per cent. under Jewish control.

It is incontestable that the Jews in pre-Hitler Germany

occupied too many key positions, and used their power to further policies alien to the wishes of the majority of the German people. During the inflation of 1923, some Jews with financial connections abroad profited in a shameless fashion and acquired land and property which the German people now consider to have been stolen from them. In Berlin, until recently, 33 per cent. of the real estate in the capital was in Jewish hands. The Jews who profited were generally not the long-settled residents, but strangers from the ghettos of Poland and Transylvania. But how were the Germans to discriminate?

A rabbi of Czernovitz, Dr. Manfred Reifer, summed up the situation of his race with great insight in 1933. His views may have changed since then, but they have stood the test of time:

"The German Jews," he wrote, "have avoided the fundamental questions of history, and have looked at the world through rose-coloured glasses. They were advocates of assimilation, they believed in Liberalism, and that anti-Semitism was a passing phase to be cured by propaganda. They thought they could evade the course of history by declaring themselves Germans of the Mosaic faith, by denying the existence of a Jewish nation, by severing all the ties that bound them to Jewry, and by striking out the word 'Zion' from their prayer books.

"The German Jews fed themselves on false hope, overlooked reality, dreamed of cosmopolitanism, of the time of Lessing and Mendelssohn. And this expressed itself in two ways; either they became Liberals, or they became the standard-bearers of Socialism. Both fields of activity furnished new food to anti-Semitism.

"In all good faith, to serve themselves and humanity, the Jews began to reach actively into the life of the German people. We trusted to the rights of democracy, and felt ourselves as equal citizens of the State, posed as censors, poured satire upon the Germans, considered ourselves as prophets, made revolutions, gave to the international proletariat a second Bible. . . . The Jew Lasalle organized the masses. The Jew Edward Bernstein popularized the Marxian ideology; and the Jews Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg brought

the Spartacist movement to life. In Bavaria the Jew Kurt Eisner seized power. Against all this the German nation rebelled. She wanted to forge her own destiny and determine the future of her own children. Can we blame her?

"We had not the power to transplant the ideas of Isaiah into the valleys of Germany, nor could we storm Valhalla with the Book of Amos; or rather, in so far as we succeeded, we buried the Jewish people under the ruins of a world that has collapsed.

"Let us try to understand the Hitler régime. Have not we Jews rebelled, and conducted bloody wars against everything foreign? What were the wars of the Maccabees but protests against a foreign, non-Jewish way of life? And of what else did the long fight of the Prophets consist? Surely of nothing else than eliminating foreign elements and foreign gods, and of the keeping sacred the original nature of Jewry. Did we not rebel against the racially related Kings of the house of the Idumæans? And did we not exclude the Samaritans from our community because they practised mixed marriages? Why should not the German nationalists do the same? We must learn to look truth in the face.

"To dodge facts solves no problem. What is occurring to-day in Germany will come to-morrow in Russia. We shall have to pay dearly for the crimes of the Communist system, and for the fact that 'Trotzky, Joffe, Zinoviev had leading posts in Soviet Russia.

"Did not thousands of Jews lose their lives in Hungary because the Jew Bela Kun erected a Soviet Republic on the soil of Stephan the Holy? Hungarian Jews paid very dearly for their prophet. . . . Within the internationals the Jews are the most radical elements. Germans, French, Poles, Czechs have a home, and their internationalism lives itself out in Germany, France, Poland, Czecho-Slovakia. It is only the Jews who have no home. The Jews Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, Kurt Eisner, Gustav Landauer; they, and the children of Liberalism, all surely desired the best, but they attained the opposite. They were cursed with blindness, they saw not the approach of catastrophe, they heard not the footfall of time—the heavy footfall of the Nemesis of history."

* * * * *

In Hungary no one living during the Communist terror of 1918 forgets that nine-tenths of the Soviet Government

was Jewish. The two most bloodthirsty savages were the President, Aaron Cohen, *alias* Bela Kun, and Tibor Szamuely, his chief executioner. Both were Jews.

"We must march ruthlessly on," said Kun, in one of his last speeches, "and extirpate everything that impedes the consolidation of the proletariat. He who imagines that this can be done with gentleness is mightily mistaken, comrades! This sentimentality towards the bourgeoisie is not only a weakness, it is—I cannot repeat it too often—a clouding of the proletarian class consciousness.

"Why did we create the Dictatorship of the Proletariat? Not for the sake of that general principle of equality which bourgeois democracy proclaims, but solely to vindicate class differences, in order that the proletarian shall be the master in the future as the bourgeois has been master in the past; to make away with all power and rulership, but pending the time when this will be possible, to be sole and absolute ruler in the economic as well as the political field." (*Vigorous applause.*)

"If anyone is suspected of being a counter-revolutionary," he continued, "let us not seek for so-called objective proofs of the fact; but let us decide ruthlessly, mercilessly, in good proletarian fashion, with no bureaucratic adherence to letter of the law, that he is a counter-revolutionary and must be dealt with as such. Comrades, I submit to the Committee the following brief resolution: 'In view of the fact that the lenient application of the Dictatorship not only fails to bring the bourgeoisie to their senses but even encourages them to counter-revolutionary activities, the Central Executive Committee resolves to enforce the Dictatorship to the full, and in the most merciless manner, and instructs the Soviet Government to drown in blood, if necessary, the bourgeois counter-revolution!'" (*Vigorous applause.*)

The revolting cruelties of Kun, Szamuely, Otto Korvin Klein, Eugene Hamburger, Bela Szanto (Schreiber), Bela Vago (Weiss), and subordinates such as Ascherowitz, Itzkowitz, Kereks, Goldberger, Löbl, Janosik, Dinnyes, Meszared, Imre Dogei, Alex Pap, Joseph Gasper, Dezso Reiheimer, Arpad Cohen (who confessed to eighteen murders and three robberies), and Isidor Bergfeld (who

confessed to 155 murders) will be indicated, although not fully described, in the chapter on Hungary. All these men were Jews.

Dr. Eugene Hamberger, a Jewish surgeon who became Commissioner for Agriculture, wrote to a Zionist correspondent: "My good fellow, we mean to ruin the Christian landlords first, then we shall send all the Christian officials and professors to the dogs; and when once the people have given in, and made up their minds to acquiesce in Communism, we can give up talking about Palestine."

And the people of Hungary have not forgotten that a young Jew, Leo Reiss, spat on the Host when it was being carried through the streets of Old Buda on the day of Corpus Christi, 1918.

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In France the Jews were comfortably established in the fifth century, for an edict of the Emperor Valentinian forbade the Jewish community at Arles to possess Christian slaves. In A.D. 582 they had a synagogue in Paris. In A.D. 1182 they were expelled, and again in 1306. In 1315 they were back, only to be massacred, and again expelled in 1365. In 1380 they were again massacred, and again expelled. So the killings and expulsions continued for four centuries. In 1777 six Guilds of Paris merchants petitioned Louis XV against the admission of Jews. "These men," the Guilds declared, "are like wasps that enter a hive to kill the bees. The Christian merchant conducts his business as an individual unit, whereas the Jews are always running together, like quicksilver."

And so, to cut a long story short, we come to M. Leon Blum, the rich Socialist Jew, who gathered his racial kin about him like pellets of mercury during his two Premierships.

On the night M. Blum fell I heard a Paris cinema audience hiss a newsreel in which he appeared. In the streets taxi-drivers were crying "A bas les Juifs!" No doubt M. Blum's book, *Du Mariage*, in which he recommends girls to throw off their virginity gaily and early, has done him serious harm in France, which is far stricter in its morals than some of us think. Abroad the book has been enthusiastically received, although I have heard it deplored—as well it may be—by a practising Jew.

"From morning to night," we read in one of the many anti-Semitic pamphlets recently published in Paris,* "the French citizen pays his tribute to the tribes of Israel. His coffee comes from the Cohens of Haifa; his bread has been handled by Louis-Dreyfus; when he listens to his radio he enriches the half-Jew, Louis Mercier; his newspapers are full of Jewish advertisements, especially of the patent medicines of Levi and Vidal; the *Intransigeant* is owned by L. L. Dreyfus, the *Populaire* by Lazarus Brothers, the *Figaro* by M. Cotnaréanu, the *Petit Parisien* and *Excelsior* by M. Braun, and the Stock Exchange swarms with Levis, Lazards, Finlays, Rothschilds, Cohens, Davids, Weils, Mayers, Sterns, Blochs, Baumanns, and their friends and relations."

To-day France is one of the most *enjuivé* countries in Europe. The headquarters of the Comintern for Western Europe is in Paris, and its offices are full of Jews.

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In England we find the Jews established in A.D. 740. William the Conqueror favoured them, and at Oxford they later established three colleges, Lombard Hall, Moses Hall, and Jacob Hall. When Richard Cœur de Lion was crowned in 1189, pogroms broke out in London, Norwich,

* *Les Juifs au Pouvoir*, by R. H. Petit. Centre de Documentation, 35, Rue Guersant, Paris 17, 1937.

Edmundsbury, Stamford, and York. Under Henry III they were accused of clipping the coin of the realm, and were compelled to pay 33 per cent. of their property into the Exchequer. In 1290 they were expelled, after being robbed of most of their possessions; and they did not return in any numbers until the time of Cromwell.

Since then the Jews have done much for England. Disraeli and the Rothschilds obtained for us the control of the Suez Canal. Jews have given England statesmen, proconsuls, judges, merchant princes, and charitable benefactors, the latter out of all proportion to their number—400,000—1 per cent. of the population. In finance their influence is not as great as is generally supposed: there are no Jews on the board of the Bank of England, and there are only three Jews out of 150 directors in the five great Joint-Stock Banks. Private banks and issuing houses with Jewish capital are respected for their probity in the City.

Jews did well in the Great War, volunteered in equal proportion to the remainder of the population, and served with equal courage in the front line, with 334 officers and 2,091 men killed.

On the other hand, far more than one per cent. of fraudulent bankruptcies, fraudulent fires, and "long-firm" swindles are Jewish. Jews are not popular with insurance companies. The more our native doctors, dentists, and professors see of Jews the less they like them. They are not popular amongst the workers in the wholesale dress trade, where they predominate, and where they make women work long hours for small pay. Nor are they popular in the East End of London. Indeed, in England affection for Jews seems to vary inversely with the square of their distance. For those in Palestine we seemed at one time ready to disrupt the British Empire, but I hope,

although I am by no means certain, that wiser counsels have now prevailed.

Let us be honest with ourselves with regard to this shocking error which we have committed, and admit that we made contradictory promises to the Arabs and Jews concerning Palestine.

Under the terms of a Covenant made between Sir Henry McMahon and the Sherif Hussein of Mecca on October 25th, 1915, the Arabs fought for us in Palestine, believing that we would support the claim to an independent Arab kingdom in that country.

But on November 2nd, 1917, we issued what is now known as the Balfour Declaration, which was in the form of a letter from the then Foreign Secretary:

"FOREIGN OFFICE,
November 2nd, 1917.

"DEAR LORD ROTHSCHILD,

I have much pleasure in conveying to you, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations which has been submitted to, and approved by, the Cabinet.

" 'His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious right of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by the Jews in any other country.'

"I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation.

"Yours sincerely,

"ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR."

The year 1917 was for us the darkest in the Great War. The submarine campaign threatened us with the slow starvation which we were applying to our enemies. There was a deadlock on the Western Front. The French army

had mutinied. Italy was on the eve of Caporetto. America had only started her preparations for war, and it was essential that she should throw her full weight into the scales.

"It was important for us," Mr. Lloyd George told the House of Commons recently (June 19, 1936), "to seek every legitimate help we could get. We came to the conclusion, from information we received from every part of the world, that it was vital we should have the sympathies of the Jewish community."

So what did we do? We sold the Arabs to win the favour of the Jews, especially the Jews of the United States of America. Mr. Lloyd George justified this action by claiming that we had to reward Dr. Chaim Weissmann, the Zionist leader, who "saved the British Army at a moment when a particular ingredient essential for our guns was exhausted." But were we unable to find anything which was ours to give to Dr. Weissmann?

Englishmen are still respected for their honesty in the East, but unless we acknowledge that we made a terrible blunder, in going behind the back of the Arabs who were fighting for us in order to please the Jews who were financing us, our credit cannot long endure. No member of the Government that was responsible for this betrayal, and no politician that now upholds it, should ever receive the suffrage of British electors. The incident is one of the blackest pages of our history.

Lord Grey put the position clearly in the House of Lords on March 27th, 1923:

"I suggest," he said, "that the best way of clearing our honour in this matter is officially to publish the whole of the engagements relating to the matter which we entered into during the war. . . . I think that we are placed in considerable difficulty by the Balfour Declaration itself. . . . It promised a Zionist home without prejudice to the civil and religious rights of the population of Palestine. A Zionist

home, my Lords, undoubtedly means or implies a Zionist Government over the district in which the home is placed, and if 93 per cent. of the population of Palestine are Arabs, I do not see how you can establish other than an Arab Government, without prejudice to their civil rights. That one sentence alone of the Balfour Declaration seems to me to involve, without overstating it, exceedingly great difficulty of fulfilment. . . . It would be very desirable, from the point of view of honour, that all these various pledges should be set out side by side, and then, I think, the most honourable thing would be to look at them fairly, see what inconsistencies there are between them, and, having regard to the nature of each pledge and the date at which it was given, with all the facts before us, consider what is the fair thing to be done."

Lord Buckmaster, then Lord Chancellor, was more emphatic. He declared that the McMahon-Hussein correspondence "showed unmistakably that there had not been something in the nature of casual inconsistency between different announcements at various times, as Lord Grey suggested, but that a deliberate pledge had been given on the one hand, and had been abandoned on the other." Nothing could be plainer. It is deplorable that Mr. Winston Churchill should ever have prostituted his talents by upholding the quite untenable proposition that Palestine had not been promised to the Arabs.

Lately the McMahon-Hussein correspondence has been the subject of further enquiry by the present Lord Chancellor, who has found that the British Government have no right to allow the continued immigration of Jews against the wishes of Palestinians (which we have permitted for twenty years) and that the Arab case "has greater force than appeared hitherto."

The plain fact is that we cannot compel the Palestinians to accept domination by strangers, except by force of arms. Our final settlement has not been published as these lines are written, but unless there is a clear and unequivocal promise to the Arabs that they shall have

self-government soon—in a much briefer period than the ten years suggested—there is bound to be further bloodshed. Once we have given representative government to the Arabs, however, there is no reason why adequate safeguards should not be arranged for the Jews now in Palestine. It is only political Zionism—the ambition to dominate all Palestine—that the Arabs will resist to the death, and that all patriotic Englishmen should also resist. In India, and throughout all the Moslem world, resentment is rising at our strange reluctance to deal fairly with this small and distracted country. I pray that our Government will be rightly guided, and will write *finis* to this most deplorable chapter in our history.

To-day there are 400,000 Jews in Palestine, where there were only some 80,000 living in 1918. The Arabs are nearly a million strong, with the whole Moslem world behind them, stretching from Tangier to Calcutta. For the last three years the situation has been growing steadily worse, for the Arabs are no more content than we should be to see their native land a refuge for a host of aliens, however unfortunate and deserving they may be. To speak in this connection of the economic benefits which the Arabs may derive from Jewish capital is only adding insult to injury.

That the Jews are aliens in Palestine would be denied by Zionists, whose dream of “next year in Jerusalem” arouses sympathy even in quarters which realize the impossibility of its practical fulfilment. But the great majority of Jews who are entering Palestine, still at the rate of a thousand a month, have only the most remote ties with the Holy Land, and are as foreign to it as an Italian would be who claimed the soil of England because the Romans once occupied it.

Moreover, as Lord Lympington has pointed out,* the

* *The New Pioneer*, December, 1938.

Palestine Economic Corporation, which controls the Central Bank of Co-operative Institutions, the Loan Bank, the Palestine Mortgage and Credit Bank, Palestine Mining Syndicate, Ltd., Bayside Land Corporation, Ltd., and Palestine Hotels, Ltd., may be said to be the real owner—or at any rate a very important real estate owner—of Palestine. And who, we may ask, are the directors of this great financial syndicate? They are twenty-four gentlemen of New York, with only one British-sounding name amongst them—David A. Brown. It is a safe bet that the ancestors of the majority of these gentlemen, whose interests are being safeguarded by British soldiers in Palestine, once worshipped the Golden Calf. For them we are risking our traditional friendship with the whole Islamic world.

Palestine, even if we could make all its small territory into a National Home for the Jews (which would necessitate fighting a Holy War against Islam), is not big enough to provide for a twentieth part of the 16,000,000 scattered Children of Israel.

Sooner or later we shall have to agree with the French to amalgamate the country with Syria—they should never have been separated—and give the combined territory back to the Arabs. The Jews might then have an autonomous enclave, subject to Arab suzerainty, but no more. Christendom cannot be plunged into chaos in order to restore the lost kingdoms of Israel and Judah. The Holy Places, however, should be guaranteed by us, to all faiths.

Is it impossible then to fulfil our pledge to the Jews? After all, we have found homes for 400,000 of them in Palestine. But can we do more? The whole world would be relieved if this talented and courageous race could once more become a nation in fact as well as name and if we heard no more of the Jews except as a people concerned with its own affairs.

Will the Powers agree to make over some of their territories, and will the Jews desire to embark on such an immense pioneering experiment as the foundation of a Jewish Dominion would entail? Time alone can show. The prospects are not at the moment encouraging. The Soviet colony of Biro Bidjan appears to have been a failure, and capitalist Jews can hardly be blamed for not desiring to live under Stalin. (But surely Communist refugees of all kinds should go to Russia?) Great vision and enormous loans will be required for the projects of mass-emigration now being considered. Let us hope that something will come of them, and that it may be possible to establish the centre of the Dominion somewhere in Palestine—say, Tel Aviv—in agreement with the Arabs, and under an international guarantee.

Given such a linking-up—it could hardly be called a gathering—of the tribes of Israel, the new Jewish Dominion would threaten no other nation, for it would be too dispersed to engage in warlike adventures, but it would be an important new factor in world-commerce.

Jews would no longer suffer from the dual allegiance of Zion and the land of their birth. Zionists would look to Palestine, and although only the more fortunate amongst them could live there, they could all journey, in body or in spirit, to the Temple of their nation, rebuilt in the land of their fathers. For the first time for centuries they would have a national culture freed of all alien influence. With their great energy and great wealth, they might send their ships afar, open up new lands, make discoveries, write masterpieces, build anew the Ark of their faith as it was in the days of Solomon. On the other hand, Jews who are anti-Zionist, and are acceptable to the countries where they live, would have additional security there.

I would not allow any more Jews to enter England, but I would like every Jew born in this country to be proud of his British citizenship. I would like every Jew to be asked if he wants to be an Englishman or a Zionist. The two are incompatible. If he wants to be an Englishman he should disinterest himself entirely in Zionism, and in all Jewish international affairs, except religious affairs. It should be clearly understood that no Jew can have two political loyalties.

If, on the other hand, a Jew desires to be a Zionist, then, even if he cannot immediately go to Zion (wherever that Dominion may in due course be established) he should be given a Zionist passport, and not be allowed to take part in the political life of Great Britain, though he would be treated with all the courtesy due to a foreigner.

Jews who decided to retain their British passports would be required to identify themselves completely with British interests. Here an obvious difficulty arises: some Jews will claim that Zionism is a British interest, and it may be difficult to compel them to take Zionist passports. Legal measures would have to be devised, but their application would not necessarily be frequent. We could rely, I believe, on Jewish organizations such as the Board of Deputies to see to it that Jews lived under their true designation. The Board of Deputies could decide in the first instance whether a Jew is a Zionist or not, for it would be to the interest of all practising Jews to see that their people do not all suffer from the increasing resentment which political Zionism will arouse in this country. Only in disputed cases would the Courts decide.

Many prominent and respected Jews in this country are anti-Zionist: they would continue to enjoy the full rights of British citizenship, with the added safeguard that they would be completely disassociated—as many of them

desire to be to-day—from the intrigues and quarrels of international Jewry.

International Jewry might or might not form the suggested Dominion of Zion under the ægis of the British Empire. Whether or not it were part of our Empire, Zionists would at any rate be clearly labelled. Not all Jewish Zionists are practising Jews, it must be remembered: indeed, a considerable number of them are Communists. How the religious Zionists would deal with their backsliders would be none of our affair.

Given the establishment of a Dominion of Zion (a large postulate, I admit) this scheme of special passports should dispel the anti-Semitism which is now growing in this country. The Jews have great possibilities when standing on their own feet. We do not want them standing on ours.

CHAPTER VII

THE GERMAN PROTECTORATES

THE break-up of Czecho-Slovakia is a bitter story for those who had hoped, as I did, that a settlement with Germany was possible this year. Excuses and explanations for her action can be found, both in history and in the immediate consequences of the Slovak secession (to be discussed later), but the main fact, overshadowing all others, is that by her disregard of previous pledges she has shaken our trust. Without confidence there can be no peace.

The shadow of the Holy Roman Empire existed long after its substance had departed, for a centralizing force is essential—and always has been—to the peace of Central Europe. When the Austro-Hungarian Empire collapsed under the stresses of the Great War, we set up in its place the equally ramshackle Czecho-Slovakia, substituting a democratic State for a dynastic Empire. But Dr. Benes dealt even less kindly with minorities than did the Emperor Francis Joseph. Now Hitler assumes the burden of managing 7,000,000 Czechs and 2,000,000 Slovaks, and will find them more difficult neighbours than we find the Irish.

But it is a superficial and unsound view of Europe that sees in German intrigue the reason for the death of Czecho-Slovakia. Czecho-Slovakia died of internal dissension: nothing but force could have held her together. The Germans had only to wait. Instead, they swooped with a haste that nearly provoked a world war in September, 1938, and which aroused the resentment of all their neighbours in March, 1939.

In order to appreciate these events in their proportion, it is necessary to go back at least as far as May, 1938, when the Czechs disseminated a purely fictitious account of a German mobilization, and themselves mobilized. From that day tension mounted in all the Chancelleries of Europe, until the crisis of September developed to the terrible conclusion that we might have to fight a world war about a matter on which virtual agreement had already been reached. We need not go into the rights and wrongs of the Sudeten case here, beyond quoting Lord Runciman's admirable letter to Mr. Neville Chamberlain of September 21st, 1938:

"It is a hard thing," he wrote, "to be ruled by an alien race; and I have been left with the impression that Czecho-Slovak rule in the Sudeten areas for the last twenty years, though not actively oppressive and certainly not 'terroristic,' has been marked by tactlessness, lack of understanding, petty intolerance and discrimination, to a point where the resentment of the German population was inevitably moving in the direction of revolt.

"The Sudeten Germans felt, too, that in the past they had been given many promises by the Czecho-Slovak Government, but that little or no action had followed these promises.

"Local irritations were added to these major grievances. Czech officials and Czech police, speaking little or no German, were appointed in large numbers to purely German districts; Czech agricultural colonists were encouraged to settle on land transferred under the Land Reform in the middle of German populations; for the children of these Czech invaders Czech schools were built on a large scale; there is a very general belief that Czech firms were favoured as against German firms in the allocation of State contracts and that the State provided work and relief for Czechs more readily than for Germans. I believe these complaints to be in the main justified.

"All these, and other, grievances were intensified by the reactions of the economic crisis on the Sudeten industries, which form so important a part of the life of the people.

"At the time of my arrival, the more moderate Sudeten leaders still desired a settlement within the frontiers of the Czecho-Slovak State. They realized what war would mean in

the Sudeten area, which would itself be the main battlefield. Both nationally and internationally such a settlement would have been an easier solution than territorial transfer. I did my best to promote it, and up to a point with some success, but even so not without misgiving as to whether, when agreement was reached, it could ever be carried out without giving rise to a new crop of suspicions, controversies, accusations and counter-accusations. I felt that any such arrangement would have been temporary, not lasting."

One wonders when the advice which the letter contains was first tendered. Had it been acted on at the end of August instead of at the end of September, Czecho-Slovakia might still be a sovereign State. If Lord Runciman was right in his views in September, as he certainly was, how came it that the British Cabinet and the British public were previously so sadly misinformed? Or did the Cabinet know the facts but hesitate to act on them for fear of a public opinion which had been spoon-fed with anti-German propaganda?

Herr Kundt, one of the Parliamentary leaders of the Sudeten party, told the Czechs on August 17th, regarding their offer of "self-administration" in four districts which had been divided so that in not one of them would the Germans have had a majority: "You still regard the State as *your* State. You do not want to concede to the other nationalities anything but a subordinate position. What you have suggested as self-government is nothing but a sham."

The Czech military occupation was in full swing. Brawls were frequent, especially at the week-ends, when the burghers of Bohemia drink hard after hard days of labour. Black eyes and sore heads were inevitable, but presently men were killed on both sides.

France called certain categories of reservists to the colours. Two Italian cruisers, due to leave Naples on a world tour, were ordered to join their stations. . . . The

Nazi Rally at Nuremberg was staged to a crescendo of hate against the Czechs, but Herr Hitler's final speech, on September 12th, while fiery in manner, did not exclude the possibility of a peaceful solution, provided that there were fundamental internal changes in Czecho-Slovakia: obviously a plebiscite was in his mind.

Italy emphasized and developed the plebiscite idea. "Henceforth," said Mussolini, "there are only two possible solutions. The first is to give the Sudeten Germans the means to determine their own future; the other is to deny them that right. To give the Sudetenland the possibility of seceding from Prague is to choose the task of justice and peace. The other solution is that of confusion of war."

In an open letter to Lord Runciman, Signor Mussolini said that if Herr Hitler were given the Czechs "he would not know what to do with them." Were millions of young men throughout Europe to die merely to give the Bolsheviks their long-desired opportunity for a world-war? . . .

* * * * *

On Thursday, September 15th, Mr. Neville Chamberlain, in his seventieth year, and a novice in air travel, set off from Heston aerodrome with his famous umbrella. The twin-engined Lockheed Electra took off in brilliant sunshine.

A crowd of 4,000 Germans greeted him at Munich airport, and other large crowds cheered him on his way to Berchtesgaden. "Surely never before did the head of a foreign Government get such a friendly ovation from the people of another State threatened to be engulfed in war." So wrote *The Times* correspondent.

For three hours Mr. Chamberlain and Herr Hitler talked together (unfortunately through an interpreter).

Mr. Chamberlain said to his host that his visit was useless if Germany intended to invade Czecho-Slovakia. Herr Hitler replied that if Great Britain accepted the principle of self-determination (*i.e.*, if she consented to an immediate plebiscite) he would hold his hand. Mr. Chamberlain returned to consult the Cabinet.

Meanwhile the situation had deteriorated. Herr Henlein published a manifesto which ended: "We wish to be home in the Reich! God bless us and our just fight!" He had come to the end of compromises. So had Dr. Benes, for he issued a decree, on September 16th, dissolving the Sudeten German Party, and ordering all arms in possession of the civilian population in Bohemia to be surrendered.

Herr Henlein and most of the Sudeten leaders crossed the frontier into Bavaria. Anarchy reigned in parts of the Sudetenland, and Communists began to hope that their day had come.

Dr. Hodza, the Prime Minister, broadcast a proclamation that the Government would not accept a plebiscite and would not surrender Sudeten territory on any account. On September 18th Herr Henlein announced the formation of an armed Free Corps, composed of fugitives from the Sudetenland. Its members rapidly increased from 10,000 to 100,000.

In London that night—the 18th—while thousands prayed in Westminster Abbey for a peace of reconciliation and justice, a meeting of the International Peace Campaign was addressed by Miss Wilkinson, Miss Rathbone, and Mr. Wilfred Roberts on "The Rule of Law," urging Great Britain to "stand firm" and to concede nothing to Germany. Afterwards part of the audience marched to Downing Street, where the French and British statesmen were conferring, and cried: "Stand by the Czechs!" They were booed by crowds in Whitehall.

Mr. Attlee, in Limehouse, said that the Labour Party stood "for freedom, for democracy, and for the rights of all free peoples." He expressed his sympathy with "those splendid, courageous German Social Democrats, the Catholics, the Jews, and with all good democrats and lovers of liberty," but he did not mention the Sudetens. Towards the end of his speech there were cries of "Attlee wants war!"

On September 19th the Anglo-French proposals for peace in Czecho-Slovakia were sent to Prague. They were even more drastic than the Czechs had feared. The Sudeten districts were to be handed over to Germany without a plebiscite, and the frontiers of Bohemia, on which they had spent £80,000,000, were to be surrendered forthwith. . . . It was hard. The Council of Ministers sat through the night and most of the following day. It was not until the morning of September 21st that a reply was drafted in the terms required. Better to yield the Sudetenland than to be destroyed as a State.

Mr. Chamberlain now decided on a second meeting with Herr Hitler, thinking his task was half done, for the only matter to discuss was how the German occupation was to be carried out. Early next morning, September 22nd, while he was on his way to Bad Godesberg, the Czecho-Slovak Government fell, and in place of Dr. Hodza, General Sirovy was appointed Prime Minister and Secretary for War. That night Czech armoured cars entered Falkenau, Graslitz, and Neudeck, and Dr. Benes ordered full mobilization of all classes up to forty years of age. "Citizens," he said in a proclamation, "the decisive moment has arrived. Keep calm, be brave and faithful. Your struggle is for justice and your Fatherland. Long live free Czecho-Slovakia!" All the Sudetenland was packed with Czech troops. Obviously Dr. Benes still hoped for some miracle on the part of his friends.

The Secretary of the French Communist Party hurried from Paris to Prague. The League of Nations Union protested against the "dishonourable" attitude of the British Government. The Women's International League of Peace and Freedom telegraphed to Lord Halifax, calling upon him to declare publicly "that Czecho-Slovakia will not be called upon to make any further sacrifices." The International Peace Campaign held numerous meetings throughout England, and distributed 5,000,000 leaflets criticizing Mr. Chamberlain's diplomacy, and repeating the old story about the Sudetens being "the best-treated minority in Europe."

Mr. Chamberlain met Herr Hitler at Godesberg at 4 p.m. on September 22nd. He had come with proposals that an International Commission should demarcate the new frontiers of Czecho-Slovakia and arrange for the transfer of populations by December 15th. Herr Hitler replied that these plans were too dilatory and offered too many opportunities for further evasion on the part of the Czechs. He wanted to occupy the Sudetenland immediately.

Mr. Chamberlain retired to his hotel to consider what to do. Evidently Herr Hitler was difficult to deal with. What was the good of shouting and raving about the Sudetens? The problem could be settled calmly, given reasonable time for the transfer of territory and population. So Mr. Chamberlain decided to write a letter, and sent it soon after breakfast on the morning of September 23rd, outlining his objections to the suddenness of the German plan. Herr Hitler's answer did not arrive until the afternoon, and contained no modification (although further explanation) of his original proposals. Mr. Chamberlain thereupon decided to return to London. At half-past ten that night he went to say good-bye to Herr Hitler (thinking, one must suppose, that war was

now almost inevitable), and received from him the memorandum containing the German demands. "I spoke very frankly," he told the House of Commons. "I dwelt with all the emphasis at my command on the risks which would be incurred by insisting on such terms, and on the terrible consequences of war, if war ensued. I declared that the language and the manner of the document, which I described as an ultimatum rather than a memorandum, would profoundly shock public opinion in neutral countries, and I bitterly reproached the Chancellor for his failure to respond in any way to the efforts which I had made to secure peace."

If this interview were ever published, I believe that even Germans would admit—perhaps not now, but in a not-distant future—that Mr. Chamberlain talked sense, and that Herr Hitler indulged in racial rodomontade.

On the night of September 26th the German Chancellor spoke before a huge audience in the Sports Palast in Berlin. He said that he had suggested to Mr. Chamberlain:

(a) That there should be a plebiscite in the disputed areas.

(b) That the plebiscite might be controlled by an international commission.

(c) That the German Army might withdraw, and that its place might be taken by 10,000 men of the British Legion, to supervise the voting.

And, further, and even more important, Herr Hitler declared:

(d) "This is the last territorial claim which I have to make in Europe."

(e) "I shall not be interested in the Czech State any more, and I can guarantee it. We don't want any Czechs any more."

This sounded fair enough, but some of us who heard the speech, and were admirers of Herr Hitler, thought that

his voice mounted sometimes to the verge of insanity. After all, why lash himself into a fury over Dr. Benes? However, the speech was decidedly conciliatory to England, and stated also that "a great nation like Poland must have an outlet to the sea."

Nevertheless we were close to war on September 27th. Trenches were dug in all the London parks: at night the work continued by the light of flares and motor headlights. The Fleet was mobilized ("as a purely precautionary measure," whatever that might mean) and the War Office called up the Air Force and anti-aircraft reserves. Twenty million gas masks and 66,000,000 sandbags were issued. Loud-speaker vans patrolled the London streets, telling the public where to go to have their masks fitted. An exodus began, chiefly of frightened aliens, who crowded the Irish mail trains and all the highways to the south and west of England. School-children were packed off for a "crisis holiday." Business was at a standstill; and an old lady put her goldfish into the Round Pond, "to give them a sporting chance in the air-raids," she explained.

"How horrible, fantastic, and incredible it is," said Mr. Chamberlain, broadcasting that night, "that we should be digging trenches and trying on gas-masks here because of a quarrel in a far-away country."

It was indeed; but no man had done more to save the peace of Europe. He had to take Great Britain as she was. We were living amidst illusions, both as to our own situation and as to the situation abroad.

In the light of what we now know about the state of our defences, it is likely that a revolution would have occurred in this country had war been declared, and had we been bombed, when the public discovered that it had been plunged into hostilities without adequate means of defence or offence.

And plunged into hostilities for what? Not for Czecho-

Slovakia surely, which had refused to give the Sudeten Germans their undoubted rights. If the Isle of Wight had been occupied for twenty years by foreigners, who had maltreated our kinsmen there, would we not have done much what the Germans did in September, 1938? . . . (We would not have done what they did in March, 1939, but that is another story.) And how, in any event, could we have prevented the Germans from taking the Sudetenland? Would we have bombed Berlin, with our then pitifully small Air Force? Would the French have crossed the Rhine? And if they had, how would they have been able to help Czecho-Slovakia, at the other side of Europe? As Lord Chatfield said: "What is the good of saying to a man in a lion's den, 'Never mind if he does eat you: I'm going to stop his rations in the future'?"

* * * * *

Amidst the thunder of rival propaganda an occasional lightning-flash lit up the situation in September, 1938.

First, we saw all the belli-pacifists of the world egging on to battle the soldiers to whom they had until recently begrudged arms and equipment. In England the League of Nations Union was loud in its demands "to stand up to the dictators," and even the *Manchester Guardian* wrote that "we shall not compel respect by weakness." In France, even more unprepared than this country, M. Léon Blum, M. Cot, M. Paul-Boncour and all their tribe were preaching the inevitability of conflict, and sometimes actually fomenting it. Anyone who now re-reads the Left-Wing newspapers published during the Munich crisis is forced to the conclusion that parallel with the mobilization of armies ran an occult mobilization of Comintern propaganda, which was broken only by Mr. Chamberlain's journeys and conversations.

Secondly, we see that in times of tension both demo-

cracies and dictatorships depend for their decisions on the will of a few men, or the will of one man consulting two or three colleagues. We see Mr. Chamberlain consulting Lord Halifax, Sir John Simon and Sir Samuel Hoare, and with them taking decisions of which even the remainder of the Cabinet was unaware. But was Mr. Chamberlain a tyrant because he flew to Berchtesgaden with Sir Horace Wilson, while the chief experts in the Foreign Office were left behind, and while a powerful Press was demanding that we should support the Czechs? Certainly not. The rôle was forced on him by the pressure of events. It is a true and sinister paradox that if he had *not* acted as a dictator, a minority of mugwumps would have forced us into war against the will of the people.

Finally, one has an impression of the large amount of real understanding and goodwill existing to-day amongst the peoples of Europe. I was in Italy during September. Not by a word or look was I ever made to feel that I might soon be a potential enemy. It was the same in England, in France, and in Germany, where no one thought of transferring political prejudice to their individual contacts with visitors. People travel more. The horizons of goodwill have enlarged, in spite of mephitic clouds of propaganda (on both sides), and in spite of German arrogance.

In spite also of the failure of the Czechs as rulers. As masters of Czecho-Slovakia, they behaved in an intolerable way to all their minorities.* Nor did they learn wisdom when German troops began to march into the Sudetenland. It would be a weary and fruitless task to apportion responsibility as between the intrigues of the Czechs and the intrigues of their enemies: the fact remains that the Czech Government could not placate the autonomists of either Slovakia or Ruthenia, where confusion became worse confounded from October, 1938, to March, 1939.

* See Appendix IV.

On March 8th, 1939, President Hacha—probably against his better judgment—allowed the Czech Army to dissolve the Slovak Government of Father Tiso. It was the beginning of the end. The action was unconstitutional, and against the wishes of the people, who were wholeheartedly in favour of secession. "Rather union with Germany than remain with the Czechs!" they cried in the streets of Bratislava. No doubt some of these demonstrations were prompted by Germany, but the Slovak demand was a cry from the heart, and was backed by the whole force of the nation. There were many casualties between Hlinka Guards and Czech troops.

Father Tiso flew to Berlin on March 13th, conferred all night with Herr Hitler, flew back at dawn to Bratislava, and secured the unanimous assent of the Slovak deputies to the independence of their country. On the morning of March 14th, 1939, Czecho-Slovakia ceased to exist.

On the same day President Hacha asked for an interview with Herr Hitler, and hurried to Berlin. Exaggerated and absurd accounts of what passed at this interview have found currency in anti-Nazi circles. Czecho-Slovakia was no more. Czech troops from Ruthenia and from Slovakia were pouring back into Bohemia. They were in a bitter mood, yet obviously the army would have to be reduced, and finances drastically adjusted. There was already a strong pro-German party in Bohemia, and a considerable body of Czech opinion, under a respected and so-called Fascist leader, had always been strongly anti-Benes. President Hacha was not bluffed or browbeaten into asking for the protection of Germany. What else could he have done? Seek support from Poland, who would have been glad enough to obtain the Skoda works? Or ask France to interfere, tied as she is to the Soviet Pact? We must remember that the Czechs do not love

France and England: compared to us they think the Germans angels of honesty. President Hacha consulted General Sirovy, the veteran leader, who is blindly trusted by the Czech army, and he agreed that German protection was necessary.

But what justification was there for the tanks, the aeroplanes, and the Gestapo that descended so swiftly on Bohemia on March 15th? Where was the hurry? What reason was there for not consulting France, Italy, and Great Britain, as Herr Hitler had promised in Munich? The reasons given are entirely unconvincing. Either Herr Hitler made a serious blunder, which is always possible in a dictatorship so absolute as his; or else his aim is the military conquest of South-Eastern Europe. We shall soon know.

The first motorized column of Germans entered Prague at 9 a.m. on March 15th. Herr Hitler arrived that night in a snowstorm, and erected his personal standard on the famous Hradschin Castle. Immediately the German Secret Police began to make arrests, and 5,000 citizens were taken into custody that night. "I never knew that Prague could look so beautiful," Herr Hitler is reported to have said, as he looked out next morning over the city of good King Wenceslas. . . .

Bohemia and Moravia will certainly enjoy material prosperity as autonomous Protectorates under Greater Germany, but they will equally certainly be discontented. However, they will be disarmed. . . . Hungary will not be disarmed, nor will she disintegrate as did Czecho-Slovakia. Jugoslavia may or may not be able to fight for her existence. Poland and Roumania certainly will. Germany's position in Central Europe is not as strong as it looks on paper. She is surrounded by nations that do not trust her, and the "Ireland" she has created has no sea to divide her from recalcitrant Czechs and stubborn Slovaks.

The Austro-Hungarian Empire was illogical and theoretically unsound, but it worked, after a fashion, because it was tolerant, and its failings were human failings. The Hitler Empire has yet to prove itself. Herr Hitler is not a Prussian, but the Prussian element is strong in his administration, and it is hated in Central Europe.

Slovakia had fought for her freedom for twenty years, during which time many of her people had come to hate the Czechs bitterly. After October, 1938, a wise Government in Prague might have held the country together by a frank recognition of the federal nature of the new State. But the Czech Army would have nothing to do with autonomy: the *Narodne Jednota* still believed that the methods by which it had made Czecho-Slovakia could hold it together against the wishes of its "minorities." The Slovaks found the Czechs intolerable neighbours, and Germany yielded to the temptation of ending an impossible situation by violence. It is the kind of temptation we ourselves never resisted in the days when we built our Empire. Especially in India, we marched from annexation to annexation, against the active hostility of France, and we were welcomed (and distrusted) by the Princes of Bengal, Oudh, and the Panjab, just as Germany has been greeted in Prague, Brünn, and Bratislava. In those days, alas! we made promises to the Indians which we did not keep, as Hitler has been doing to us.

On a short view, Germany's action has brought her rich rewards: £28,000,000 in gold or foreign exchange—the huge Skoda Works, employing 50,000 men working day and night on armaments—other valuable industries—the complete disarmament of the well-equipped Czech Army, and the acquisition of all its stores. But on a long view Germany is weakened by her Protectorates. Weakened, first and foremost, as I have already said, by her breach of faith, but also because Herr Himmler

was right in what he said to Sir Philip Gibbs in May, 1938: * "We don't want Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Ruthenians, or other non-Germanic peoples within our frontiers. As for Mr. Napoleon, we have read a little history, and we know what happened to him. We know that if we pursued that policy it would be for Germany the road to ruin. We shan't go that way." Now both Germany and Italy have gone that way, and have strengthened their material frontiers at the cost of psychological factors. The Germans have over-reached themselves, as they did in the Great War when they declared unrestricted submarine warfare and brought the United States to the side of the Allied Powers.

We must beware of a geo-political romanticism which sees all Europe as a potential battlefield, where politicians are scheming for strategic advantages. No doubt War Offices everywhere are doing so. In the past we took Gibraltar and Malta (for instance) to secure our position in the Mediterranean. But Europe is a potential playground and garden as well as a potential battlefield. Men everywhere genuinely do want peace. Herr Hitler assumed the protection of Slovakia, for instance, in order to save her from Hungary, who threatened (and is still threatening) to invade her. The Slovaks were united in little except their anti-Czechism and anti-Semitism, but they were united also in asking the Germans to help them. To-day they have stability, at the price of a certain surrender of liberty (and a certain gain in liberty, for the Czech dominion was more galling than the German) and they are delighted (*pace* Pertinax, Tabouis, and Co.) to allow German troops to fortify their frontiers.

Germany has behaved badly towards us, let it be repeated emphatically, and has made it impossible for us to reach an understanding without taking off our coat and

* Sir Philip Gibbs in a letter to *The Times* on March 18th, 1939.

getting ready for a fight. The same is true of Italy. It is waste of time to complain. We shall need our breath to convince the Balkans that we are not secretly supporting Bolshevism. Is it to be a just peace, by reason and reconciliation, or a knock-out blow? I have endeavoured to consider these problems as a whole at the end of the chapter on the Balkans.

CHAPTER VIII

NO! NO! NEVER!

HUNGARY stands on the brink of great events: one cannot be in Budapest nowadays without feeling that history is being made there. But instead of discussing politics one is tempted to dance all night to the music of gypsy violins. One is tempted, and yields. One crosses the Danube as the sun is rising, sees the sumpter horses of peasants bringing in their produce, and steamers bowing as they pass up river (they have hinged funnels), and the quiet, graceful streets of Old Buda in the dawnlight. . . . And then one plunges into a cool bath of effervescent water.

For sheer joy of living and beauty of surroundings, Budapest is a city unrivalled. It is only with an effort that the stranger remembers the tragedies it has seen, and the wounds from which it still suffers. On the surface all is gay, but in Liberty Square you will see the words at the head of this chapter laid out in flowers; and above them the national flag flies at half-mast, in mourning for the lost lands of Hungary.

Those lands may soon return, or some of them, for the German armies on the Danube claim to be liberators of oppressed minorities. For a thousand years Hungary maintained her integrity under St. Stephen's Crown. But owing to the exhaustion of the Great War her resistance was weakened, allowing creatures such as Bela Kun and his confederates to thrive. On her sick-bed she was robbed of two-thirds of her people, lands, livestock, mineral wealth. When she recovered, impoverished and dismembered, she had been inoculated for generations to come

against a virus which is still a peril to the rich democracies of the West.

We can learn much from what happened in Hungary. If I recall the memory of her past miseries, it is because the first Communist conspiracy, after the Russian success, shows us so clearly how the Bolsheviks behave when in power. Chronologically this chapter should have followed that on Russia, but geographically its place is here, by the Balkans. If the reader turns to the chapter on Spain he will note the similarity of the methods of the Communists in Hungary and in Spain.

* * * * *

The murder of Count Stephen Tisza, the veteran statesman who had opposed the entry of Hungary into the Great War (but who never, from motives of patriotism, revealed in public the advice he had given to the old Emperor Francis Joseph) opened the flood-gates of Bolshevism towards the West.

Count Tisza was shot on October 31st, 1918, by soldiers said to belong to the Social Democratic Party of Hungary, under the direction of a young Jew, Joseph Pogany, who afterwards became a Minister under the Communist Régime of Bela Kun. So the revolution in Budapest began: its tide reached Vienna, Munich, Berlin, and Rome before receding; and advanced again, in 1934, to Geneva, Paris, Madrid, and Prague. Full tide of Comintern activity was in July, 1938, at Prague, when "the nations in their harness" seemed to be gathering for a world war; it turned again at Munich, and was at its low after the fall of Barcelona. But the friends of Moscow have by no means lost hope; there are still infinite possibilities of trouble in Central Europe.

Towards the end of 1918, when Hungary was full of prisoners-of-war released from Russia, spreading the then

unknown evangel of Communism, Count Tisza, who had been living in retirement, came forward to collaborate with the weak Government of the day; for nothing mattered, he declared, but to preserve Hungary from internal troubles.

Others thought differently. Count Michael Karolyi (pronounced Karoy), a tall and handsome aristocrat, with an artificial palate, believed that his mission was to lead the Hungarian people into new ways of life. His physical defect—he had learned to talk late in childhood—made him a poor speaker, but gave him an inordinate power-complex.

Surrounded by the amenities of his great position, well connected not only in his own line but by his marriage with the lovely Countess Andrassy, he was a famous cosmopolitan figure in the artistic and fashionable circles of Vienna and Paris. His passion was politics, however; and, like many another gentleman, he felt in closer touch with the very poor, with peasants and factory workers, than with the middle classes whose careful lives were remote from his gay and spendthrift splendour. Politically and socially his greatest enemy was Count Tisza, who stood for thrift, tradition, hierarchy.

In the chaos of Hungary in 1918, Count Karolyi saw an opportunity to make himself a Moses leading the masses to a promised land; not quite the promised land of Marx (for he was never a full Communist), but to a New Jerusalem whose bulwarks glowed with the promises of Moscow. We must give him credit for sincerity, for he distributed most of his property to the peasants on his large estates, but his ability is open to question. When he came to power he found that the Communists were not in the least grateful to him for the liberty he had accorded them in the name of democracy, and he realized—rather dimly—that they were bent on destroying not

only free speech, but Hungary, and if possible Europe. It was too late then. When he gave Bela Kun the government of Hungary, after six months of concessions and muddle, nobody regretted his departure.

The immediate cause of his resignation was the drastic demands made by the Allied Powers on March 20th, 1919, for the surrender of Hungarian territory.

"They want to take the sky above our heads, the ground under our feet," writes Countess Tormay in her memoirs.* "They want to take our ancient Hungarian towns, which we have not conquered by arms but which we have built with the sweat of our brow. They want to take the region of Sopron, where the giant of Hungarian music, Francis Liszt, was born; Czenk, where the builder of modern Hungarian culture, Count Stephen Szechenyi, sleeps his eternal sleep; Pressburg, the ancient coronation town, whence the cry of Hungarian fidelity 'Moriatur pro rege nostro!' rang out over land and sea."

Powerless to protest, yet too proud to yield, Count Karolyi made over the Government to Bela Kun and his followers, whose only Fatherland was the Proletariat.

Aaron Cohen, *alias* Bela Kun, was the son of the notary of a village near Nagyvarad. In early youth he became the reporter of a small newspaper in that town, and was imprisoned for making a seditious speech. We find him later as secretary to a Working-men's Institute in Kolozsvár, in which position he was accused of embezzling £90. His friends saved him from trial, but he had been guilty of malpractice, and lost his position. When war broke out he joined the colours as a non-commissioned officer. He is said to have fought well in the trenches, but he was soon taken prisoner by the Russians.

Always a Socialist, he found himself in his spiritual home in the Russia of 1917, and when he was liberated

* *An Outlaw's Diary*, by Cecile Tormay, 1927.

by the Revolution he made friends first with Kerensky and then with Lenin. The latter appointed him chief of a School of Propaganda in Moscow, and from there he directed also the process of bolshevizing the Hungarian soldiers still in Russia. In 1918 he was sent back to Hungary to prepare for the coming world revolution.

So well did he acquit himself that he soon became the virtual leader of an early Popular Front. For a time he suffered eclipse, for Count Karolyi had to imprison him (with many apologies, however) when he was discovered to be subverting the army. As soon as he was liberated, on March 21st, 1919, he issued two proclamations. The first was for internal consumption: "To-day we initiate the work of expropriating the robber-knight system of Capitalism." The other, for foreign readers, appealed to the Czech and Roumanian invaders to throw off the yoke of their oppressors.

The jails were immediately opened, and all prisoners liberated who had been guilty only of capitalist crimes against society, such as theft. Courts of law were suspended, and revolutionary tribunals were set up in their place, with power of life and death, which were frequently exercised after a trial in which the accused was allowed exactly one minute for his defence by the judge's watch.

Private houses were declared to be the property of the State: no adult was allowed more than one room, and no family more than three: bourgeois householders had reliable proletarians quartered on the premises. Banks were placed under Government control, and an embargo was laid on safe-deposits. More than £1,000,000 in foreign specie was sent abroad, chiefly to Vienna, for the purposes of propaganda. Weapons were seized in private houses by persons who described themselves as authorized by the Soviet to search for them. Some of these searchers were children, others were criminals: women and children

were maltreated, and not only weapons but anything else of value was taken.

Soon a levy of hostages began, amongst whom were six former ministers, several Bishops, and many leading business men. "There is nothing to be obtained without blood," said Bela Vago, one of the chiefs of the Revolutionary Tribunal. "Without blood there is no terror, and without terror there is no Dictatorship." Bela Kun was of the same mind: "We must drown the counter-revolution in blood," he cried.

In May, 1919, the Army was "democratized" (*i.e.*, the officers were cashiered or shot, and agents of Moscow put in their place), while the teaching of patriotism was abolished from the schools. Religion was derided. The Press was not only free, but filthy: the following being one of the milder specimens of punctuation-less "proletarian poetry":

"Europe fat slimy
Whore with whisky eyes
The sweat of perfume factories
Christ pants between your breasts
Sailors stroke your belly
Freedom Equality Motherhood
A host of priests spring from your thighs
And crosses blossom in the shade of cows."

The technique of terror followed by the Hungarian Soviet was similar to that of the Russian; on a smaller scale, but of similar intensity. It would have done more if it had had more time. Szamuely, for instance, had plans for the systematic extermination of recalcitrant peasants, on the lines which Stalin afterwards followed; and his instinct was not far wrong, for it was the passive resistance of the peasants (passive, because they had no weapons but pitchforks and fists), which was the real cause of the breakdown of Hungarian Communism.

Some notes on the principal assistants of Bela Kun may be of interest:

The Chief of the Political Investigation Department was a hunchback by the name of Otto Korvin, also known as Korvin-Klein. He was of a vindictive nature, and used to push a ruler down the throat of a stubborn witness, to make him talk. He had himself been a bourgeois, and in former days he had owned a little sawmill and timber depôt in the north of Hungary, where he exploited and half-starved his employees.*

Joseph Pogany, some-time Commissar of Education, was a mountebank of notorious incapacity and profligate life, who imagined himself to be the Napoleon of the movement, and was generally surrounded by prostitutes. He was despised even by his own associates; indeed, nobody took him seriously, except the victims of his robberies and murders.

Sigismond Kunfi was a man of different mettle: clever, bold, ambitious, and an inveterate turn-coat, he was first a Jew, then a Protestant, and finally a militant atheist. Originally he called himself a Social Democrat, but he never had any doubt about his hatred of society. "Your efforts on behalf of your workmen," he said, in an outburst of sincerity to an employer of Budapest, "are just what we don't want, for they frustrate the class-war. What we want is a discontented mass of labourers." Although he worked with Bela Kun throughout the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, he turned on him savagely afterwards. The heralds of the new dawn bespattered each other freely with mud when they were exiles in Vienna: their writings are as embittered as is the correspondence of their apostle, Marx.

Tibor Szamuely was the child of a well-to-do family

* *Bolshevism in Hungary*, by Baron Albert Kaas and Fedor de Lazarovics. Grant Richards, 1931.

from Galicia. Like Kun, he began his career as a journalist in Nagyvarad, but in 1912 we find him working for a Conservative newspaper in Budapest. In the Great War he was quickly taken prisoner, and so met Kun, who entrusted him, by Lenin's wish, with the editorship of a Hungarian paper published in Moscow. Baron Kaas describes him as "haggard and of a corpse-like pallor, walking amongst his robust, thick-set terrorists."*

It was Szamuely's special mission to terrorize the countryside. He travelled in a train painted a brilliant red, from whose windows victims were thrown when their executioners had grown tired of baiting them. Peasants condemned to death were compelled to dig their own graves and to jump off a table with a noose round their necks, in presence of their wives and families. If they hesitated, Szamuely's men prodded them with bayonets. A woman who refused to reveal the details of a counter-revolutionary plot had her teeth dug out with a chisel; another had a nail hammered into her skull; and yet another had her tongue sewn to the end of her nose.

In Szolnok, Szamuely hung twenty-four people (including Paul Suranyi, the President of the Court of Chancery) without even the semblance of a trial, and shot dead a schoolboy, aged sixteen, whom he overheard saying that "these people are wild beasts, not men."

Such were the persons who ruled Hungary for 133 days, from March 21st to August 1st, 1919. Little has been written about them in the English language, although the world has heard much of the misdeeds of the other dictators—those who oppose Communism.

* * * * *

Soon it became clear that a crash was coming. Bela Kun transferred £50,000 to Basle. Throughout July a

* *Bolshevism in Hungary.*

special train stood ready to take him and his friends to the safety of bourgeois (although bolshevizing) Austria.

Slowly but surely a Provisional Government of true Hungarians was constituted at Szeged. And slowly the Allied Powers came to realize that it was to Szeged, not to Budapest, that they would have to turn to find a Government representing the will of the people. But how remove Bela Kun? They did not want to attack him themselves, for Bolshevism was an infectious disease in those days, and the Roumanian army stood ready, even anxious, to do the job. It marched on Budapest, in spite of the protests of the Provincial Government at Szeged.

On July 31st, Bela Kun issued a manifesto demanding the support of Workers of the World for Hungary; but next day there were tears in his eyes, and his words came with difficulty, when he spoke for the last time before his flight. "I should have liked the Proletariat to fight it out on the barricades, and to declare that it would sooner die than give up power. I have asked myself: 'Shall we mount the barricades ourselves, with no masses at our back?' We would gladly sacrifice ourselves, but would such a sacrifice benefit the cause of the International Proletarian Revolution?"

Without undue delay he decided against the barricades, and, as his suitcases were already packed, he took the waiting train to Vienna. So ended the second Communist conspiracy.*

* * * * *

What happened when the Roumanian army arrived in

* Bela Kun's subsequent history is obscure. After a period of internment in Austria, in a comfortable castle, he was liberated by his Social Democratic friends and returned to his masters in Moscow, who sent him to the Crimea. In 1936 he went to Barcelona, but was a failure there, and was last heard of in a Russian lunatic asylum.

Budapest, against the wishes of the Hungarians, need not be recounted here. Cities have been looted by disorderly soldiers before; and there are many things best passed over in silence if we would have peace in Central Europe.

* * * * *

The partition of Hungary was the most flagrant of the injustices committed in Paris after the Great War. The Germans were a powerful nation, then 67,000,000 strong, and a potential danger to mankind. The treatment they received at the hands of the victorious Powers was certainly unwise, but their encirclement and humiliation was at least excusable on the grounds of fear. Hungary, on the other hand, was torn to pieces because she was small, to satisfy a band of greedy or ignorant intriguers.

To-day the results of this policy are plain for all to see. "The wisdom of Providence," Gibbon tells us, "frequently condescends to use the passions of the human heart and the general circumstances of mankind as instruments to execute its purpose." It seems, now that we are wise after the event, as if France and England had planned to bring the Germans step by step to the Middle Danube.

By the Treaty of Trianon, Hungary was deprived of two-thirds of her lands. Considering her as a shilling, Roumania received four pennyworth of territory, Czechoslovakia three pennyworth, Jugoslavia a penny, and Austria a fraction, leaving the original Hungary with less than fourpence. Roumania received more Hungarian land (103,000 square kilometres) than was left to Hungary herself (93,000 square kilometres). As regards population, Hungary, which had more than 18,000,000 inhabitants before the Great War, was left with 8,500,000, while Roumania grew to 18,000,000, and the new nations of

Czecho-Slovakia and Jugoslavia appeared on the map of Europe, each with about 14,000,000.

This situation, of nations with no common bond of nationality, could not long survive. The Little Entente was a military alliance, planned by Dr. Bencs, of 40,000,000 people, with an army of 5,000,000, against Hungary, with 8,000,000 people and an army of 35,000, to prevent her from recovering her lost lands. That is the naked truth about the Little Entente: it was a military alliance by Czecho-Slovakia, Jugoslavia, and Roumania—all members of the League of Nations and signatories of the Kellogg Pact—to hold down another League member by force. It did not survive the Anschluss. German influence advanced down the Danube, on the whole with the warm approval of Hungary, though she was—and is—jealous of her sovereignty.

Hungary's claims to the borderlands contiguous to Czecho-Slovakia, which are rich in timber, gold, and iron-ore, have been satisfied, and nearly 1,000,000 Hungarians have returned to their native land. In Ruthenia, Hungarians are only 30 per cent. of the population, but Ruthenian trade has always been towards Budapest, and probably the majority of the population would prefer the Hungarians to any other masters, at any rate until the Ukrainian question comes again to the fore.

Between Slovakia and Hungary the position is obscure. There is a Magyar Party in Bratislava, and undoubtedly if Father Tiso had not placed his country under the protection of Germany the Hungarians would have invaded it. Now that it is under the wings of the Nazi eagle, we shall be spared further crises along this frontier at least.

From Roumania the claims of Hungary are more difficult to satisfy, for the 1,700,000 Hungarians in exile are not homogeneous, but scattered amongst Roumanians, Germans, and other races; moreover, even the Hungarian

census of 1910 gave the proportion of Hungarians in Transylvania as 34 per cent., Roumanians as 55 per cent., Germans as 9 per cent., and other races as 2 per cent. None the less, some measure of satisfaction or at least of security for the Hungarian minority must be obtained sooner or later, and why not sooner, since delay will solve nothing? The district between Nagyvarad and Szatmar-Nemeti, for instance, contains 300,000 Magyars who want to return to Hungary; they cannot be a source of real strength to Roumania.

In Jugoslavia there are 500,000 Hungarians. On a proportional basis they would be entitled to 9,000 of the 250,000 posts in the public service of Jugoslavia; but there are, in fact, only 350 Hungarians so employed. Politically, the Hungarians are virtually disfranchized by the electoral law of September, 1931. Even in local affairs they are nowhere represented in proportion to their numbers. In the town of Okanizsa, for instance, where 94 per cent. of the population is Hungarian, seventeen of the thirty-four members of the municipal government are Slavs. As in Roumania, so in Jugoslavia, the majority of school inspectors speak no Hungarian.

The treatment of minorities is a depressing subject, not only in Central Europe, but everywhere. They complain that they are not allowed to use their language, or teach it to their children (except in their homes) that their industries are being ruined, that they are being expropriated from their lands by various unfair laws, and that the magistrates and police of the dominant power are oppressive. Unfortunately these complaints are often justified. Man's inhumanity to man is confined to no one climate or continent. Nevertheless, the dominant race often has reason on its side. If a nation is to be a workable proposition there must be goodwill amongst its components. What are the rulers to do if a minority refuses to co-operate in

the task of nation-building? Give it more concessions? The path of conciliation may lead to peace, but it may, on the other hand, encourage the extremists and lead to a demand for separation. Only in Switzerland have different peoples, speaking different languages and holding different branches of the Christian faith, settled down together peaceably.

Obviously not all the minorities of Central Europe can find satisfaction for all their demands, for many of them are mutually irreconcilable. *Some* minorities must accommodate themselves, by reason of their geographical position, to living under foreign rule. The question is, *Which?* In an ideal Europe, ought the Bulgarians to have the Dobrouja, the Greeks Cyprus, the Italians Malta, the Spaniards Gibraltar, the Germans Danzig and South Tyrol? When Herr Hitler travelled southwards to visit Signor Mussolini in May, 1938, the villages of South Tyrol on his route greeted him with cheers and flags. When he travelled back, having given his pledge to the Italians that this frontier should be for ever inviolable, the Tyrol was silent and empty; not a man nor a decoration was to be seen. I was told by a member of the Führer's staff that Herr Hitler stood long at the window of his train, but his thoughts he kept to himself.

Prophecy is particularly rash with regard to Hungary, because she is determined to recover her territory, and will adopt a purely opportunist policy in this regard. We cannot blame her. We have never lifted a finger to remedy the injustices of the Treaty of Trianon.

Major Frank Szalasi, the pro-German leader of the Hungarian National Socialists, is in prison, serving a three-year sentence. Many Hungarians think that he is a martyr, and some—a diminishing number—that he is a dangerous fanatic. Inevitably the Hungarians will be

influenced by Germany, but this picturesque and chivalrous people, with its tolerance,* Tokay, and *tziganes*, will certainly try to resist any attempt to make her goose-step to the drums of the Prussians.

But will she succeed? Can she keep her independence when she has no air-force and no army to compare in numbers with that of Germany? Even twenty years ago a brave people could resist great odds, but what can a country do nowadays against the shattering power of superior armaments? We shall see. Sooner or later men will find an answer to any machine; but to-day and to-morrow we cannot hope for any help from Hungary.

* During the Great War the English trainers of racehorses in the suburbs of Budapest remained unmolested looking after their charges; and a picture of King Edward VII, with cigar and bowler hat atilt, remained in its place of honour over the fireplace in the coffee-room of the Royal Hungarian Jockey Club.

CHAPTER IX

THE BALKANS TO-DAY

AIR lines all over Europe treat their passengers like sheep. (But not in the United States, where the stewardesses are so *chic*!) One is herded here and there and given far less initiative than a bell-wether. One is weighed. One's baggage is weighed. So far, so good, but then one is deprived of one's ticket, one's passport, one's baggage (and generally of one's camera, which travels to its destination in a sealed bag), and left metaphorically in the air, but actually kicking one's heels in a waiting-room, feeling naked and neglected.

One is irritated, I think legitimately. I can understand the camera being suspect in these anxious days; but for the baggage I should like a receipt. (It contains an ancient tail-coat, in case a pontiff or a prince commands me to his court.) My ticket I paid for in hardly won sterling; and as to the passport, it used to be a precious document until closed economic systems made it a scribbling-block for cashiers of registered marks, tourist lire, dinars, leks, leis, pengoes, and all the other coinages of a distracted Christendom.

Flying has made it possible to be in Amsterdam in the morning and in Athens in the evening, or to breakfast in Rome (as we are doing) and lunch in Tirana; but every advantage that the individual gains in speed is at the price of liberty. A tramp is free to choose his times and roads, but camel caravans, trains, cars, aeroplanes, entail progressive complications and submissions. The quicker we go, the less we are our own masters: a chastening thought!

For a moment my vanished suitcases gladden my eyes, then they disappear into the belly of a beautiful new white four-engined Savoia-Marchetti 'plane. We're off! Swooping over a loop of the tawny Tiber at two hundred miles an hour, we soar up, and up, and up, to twelve thousand feet, to give us clearance of the Apennines. There is nothing to see up here above the flocked white clouds, and I dislike that leaden feeling in my ears which affects me at certain stages between Heaven and Charing Cross; but the ensemble is grand: the lovely shape of a modern air liner, the drone of the great engines, the settling down in the saloon with a glance at the passengers, and the fleeting thought that one of them may be a lunatic with a bomb in his pocket, the taxiing down to the lee side of the aerodrome, and the never-failing surprising feeling of lightness as the engines open out; then trim fields and small people below, intent on earthly affairs, while here we are moving with god-like speed to a new country. . . . It's fun, and one forgets to trouble deaf Heaven with one's bootless cries. . . .

At Brindisi we take coffee, pass the Customs, fly across the glittering Adriatic to Albania. It is only forty minutes by air from Brindisi to Tirana, but during them we have passed to a different world and age.

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The first thing I saw in Tirana, that now unhappy little capital, was the smallest donkey I have ever seen, bestridden by a grand old gentleman in rags. He was poor, but happy and carefree, singing of a long-dead hero, and smelling a rose.

The rose is typical of Albania: everyone loves flowers, and gardens would be as popular as they are in England if the people had time to cultivate them. But they haven't. The struggle for existence is hard in Albania.

Under Italy, Albanians may find more employment, but I do not think they will be happy. They are a proud people, and I mourn their subjection. We English have broken proud peoples—the Sikhs, for instance, and the Zulus—so that we cannot complain too much of the Italian action, especially as it seems to have been carried out with consideration.

Nevertheless I do complain, just as I complain of my own country when it invades the uplands of Tirah, where a decent folk live who want to be free. Albania is a pawn, swept off the chessboard in a ruthless game of power-politics. One day she will claim again the nationhood which she has so long maintained against a world of foes.

As I stood in the market square of Tirana, amidst magnificent mountaineers, wearing their strange black jackets, called *xhok*, with pom-poms on the shoulders, in mourning for Skander Beg, and gazelle-eyed women, sturdy children, sugar-canes, water-melons, boots, embroideries, bread, cigarette-holders with fat amber tips, chairs, tables, buckets, observing the splendid aspect of the people, their fine physique, their calm and dignified manners, and the excellent shapes and patterns of their native crafts, I thought that I would rather live here than amidst the hurry of London or the tumults of Rome.

So I thought, not only then, but often. The Sons of the Eagle, as the Albanians call themselves, are a gallant and romantic race, perhaps the most romantic left in Europe. They claim half a dozen Turkish Sultans and scores of Grand Viziers among their ancestry, as well as their national hero, Skander Beg (1443-1468), who was called the "Sword and Shield of Christendom" and appointed by Pius II as Commander-in-Chief of the Armies of Europe against the Turks.

Poking about in side streets, I came upon the garden

of some Bektashi dervishes. A grey-beard of the Order asked me to enter and showed me the room of their rites. A picture of King Zog hung in the place of honour, over the dervish throne. A grandfather clock ticked away in a corner. Sheepskin rugs were rolled up along the divans. I saw swords, and turbans, and a pile of skewer-like instruments whose use is familiar to me, for I have seen them driven through the cheeks and thrust through the fore-arms of dervishes five thousand miles away. Strange how little we know of these mystics of Islam, spreading throughout the Mediterranean seaboard from Tangier to Tunis, and up the Adriatic, and down to Turkey (where they meet in the secrecy of Early Christians, and, like them, are a leaven working amongst the godless), through Persia, the Moslem Soviet Republics, Afghanistan, and India. It is a far cry from Tirana to Hyderabad, but in both cities, by the full of the moon, the beat of tom-toms calls men to the ecstasies of the Sufi Allah. If there is now to be a war in Europe, the world will hear more of the Dervish Orders, for they are connected with a powerful subterranean pan-Islamic movement.

Not that the dervishes are oppressed in Albania, where there is a blessed toleration for all religions. In the Sadiye Normal School for Girls, with its 625 pupils, I was told that during Bairam the Christian boarders help the Moslems to make their beds, wait at table, and do other routine housework, so that the latter may attend their religious festivals, and similarly at Easter the Moslems help the Christians.*

A motto in this school, taken from a speech of King Zog's, struck me as pleasantly different from the usual slogans of dictatorships: "The people who have the best

* Albania's population consists of a million souls, of whom 70 per cent. belong to Islam, 20 per cent. to the Orthodox, and 10 per cent. to the Roman Catholic Church.

schools in the world will be the leaders of the world: if not to-day, then to-morrow." The headmistress showed me the gymnasium, recently opened by one of the King's sisters: it was equal to anything of the kind to be seen anywhere in Europe, and I have become something of an expert in girls' schools since I began this book.

The thirst for knowledge in Albania would be remarkable if it were not common throughout the old *pashaliks* of the Turkish Empire. Everyone in the Balkans is eager to learn English. The Herbert Library in Tirana was always full of readers, as was the Public Library.

Until the independence of Albania was proclaimed in 1920, there were no national schools; in 1936 there were 590 primary schools in the country, with 50,000 pupils, and 7 boarding schools for young children in the mountain regions, with 450 boarders. Of secondary schools and *lycées* for boys there are 4, with a total of 2,172 pupils.

Now, under the new administration, Albania will no doubt be much more thoroughly educated and modernized. The blood-feud and the *besa* (an inviolable oath of peace) will lapse from living memory. What is a word of honour worth in Europe to-day? Albania is mediæval: she must learn our ways. . . . And what of King Zog? Although he was not often seen in person (the rarity of his public appearance caused some comment), he was a cautious and clever ruler. *Les absents ont toujours tort*, but one day he may come back.

Ahmed Zogu was born in the village of Burgayeti, beyond Kruja, in the mountains of Mati, on October 8th, 1895, of the royal line of Skander Beg. When ten years old he was sent to Constantinople, where Abdul Hamid, the Red Sultan, took a fancy to him. In the summer of 1912, when he was rising seventeen, he returned in haste to Albania, for rumours of the Balkan War were rife in Turkey, and the ambitious young man wanted to be in at the death of

the Empire and the resurgence of his native land. The Serbs invaded Albania. Zog went to Scutari with a band of his Mari stalwarts and tried to defend the town from the Serbs, losing 200 men in the attempt. Unsuccessful, he retired to Burgayeti, watching events.

When the Serbs were finally defeated by the Austro-Hungarians, in 1916, Zog opened negotiations with the victors. They invited him to Vienna, but kept him there, as a hostage, until the collapse of the Central Powers.

No sooner was the war over than Zog hastened again to Scutari with some hastily raised levies, and held that city as its Governor throughout the miseries and muddles of the years during which the Allied Powers disputed the apportionment of the spoils of victory in Paris.

On January 28th, 1920, Albania declared her independence for the second time. She had realized (and none too soon, for Italy and Greece had come to an agreement to partition the country) that to rely on the justice of the Great Powers was to lean on a broken reed. Zog became the Minister of the Interior in the new Albanian Government, then Commander-in-Chief, and in 1922 President of the Council. In June, 1924, however, a rebellion broke out led by Monsignor Fan Noli; and Zog had to escape to Belgrade.

Fan Noli proceeded to make an unholy mess of things in Tirana and in Geneva, where he told assembled pundits, in the days of their power and glory: "In reviewing the work which has been accomplished by the League of Nations during its five years of active life, I am afraid that even the most exalted pacifist will throw up his hands in despair and exclaim: 'Let us rather have war than such tedious talk about peace!' What has been done in the past five years lies in peace—in eternal peace—locked tightly in the dead files of the Secretariat."

Doubtless this was true, but it was hardly tactful. Fan

Noli antagonized not only the wise men of Geneva, but the Albanian chieftains, who were far more important, and he failed to placate the Albanian peasantry. In December, 1924, serious disturbances broke out in the north. Zog was coming to claim his country.

Fan Noli telegraphed to the League for protection. He received none: not even the encouragement accorded in similar circumstances to Abyssinia and China. On December 23rd his Cabinet left for Valona, where they declared that they would continue to fight to the last drop of their blood; but on Christmas Day they embarked for Italy.

King Zog might have persecuted his enemies. He did not. He pacified them, and tried to cut his coat according to his cloth in the matter of reforms. Unfortunately he did not succeed. Pressure from Italy was too strong. He borrowed from her—how much is unknown—and he became involved in a network of intrigue which brought him to his ruin.

By the "conquest" of Albania, Italy has outflanked Jugoslavia, and has also threatened Greece. But she has a turbulent, hostile population to control, and difficult, mountainous frontiers to defend. Armies which advance upon alien soil must eventually retreat. After Albania, what? Much Italian blood may be spilt upon this thirsty earth. The country is small, but not easily accessible to bombers. Communications are so primitive that blockade of hostile areas will be difficult. In the mountains of Mati the Albanians will not yield allegiance to Rome, whatever they may do in Tirana; and the Italians will find it necessary to keep a large force of occupation permanently in the country.

When one sees Kruja, with its old castle of Skander Beg, which so long resisted the might of Islam, one can penetrate, I think, a little into the mind of the King and

his people. Of all the places I have seen, across fifty years of life and a hundred thousand miles of travels, none symbolizes more strikingly man's eternal struggle for freedom. When I saw it, little Albanian boys were drilling there, in the market-place, against the time when their country might again be threatened.

I climbed above Kruja, to a dervish shrine, where there is a tunnel, through which tradition relates that a holy man escaped to Corfu (I forget why). The air was clear, revealing the roof-tops of Durazzo and the sapphire waters of the Adriatic. Between the mountain-top and the castle an eagle soared, searching the barren ground below us. An old shepherd arrived, and asked me to take a cup of coffee. I refused, for I had no time, but I was told afterwards that I had sinned by Albanian standards, for they are the most hospitable people on earth.

On the mountainside grew orchids, sturge, thyme, saxifrage, starch-hyacinths, and borage. Albania is a beautiful country; small wonder that her people are passionately patriotic. I know well, from having been an "under-dog" in Turkey, that the Balkans are not as lovely as they seem to be to the comfortable traveller, being full of fevers, and fleas, and extortionate minor officials; nevertheless they have kept—strange paradox—something of a poise and a sanity which we are losing in Europe. When one comes to these mountains, or to the high plateau of Spain, where also an unspoiled people live, one realizes all that we have sacrificed in our scramble for wealth.

"What is this life, if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare?"

They have time. They have something which we must recover, if we are to save our souls alive. God bless Albania, and may she one day regain her liberty!

* * * * *

Everyone grows lyrical about Ragusa (Dubrovnik), with its fat pigeons and peaceful narrow streets. It is a honeymoon place, like Budapest, Venice, Florence, Rome, Naples, Athens. . . . In a church in Dubrovnik I saw a modern picture of the Virgin, with the following lines of well-cut simplicity written beneath in a childish hand:

“Ave Maria,
Sci dolce e pia:
Vergine eletta
Fosti concetta
Senza peccato:
Ti fè il Creato
Vergine santa
Felice pianta:
Deste al mondo
Frutto giocondo. . . .”

Regretfully I left the Adriatic, taking the narrow-gauge railway for Serajevo. There are no sleeping cars or restaurant cars on this line, but I was comfortable, eating cheese and a head of lettuce, washed down with red wine.

Why do we needlessly complicate life? I am a sinner in this respect myself, and tend with advancing years to take undue thought about my food, but even from the standpoint of greed, what more delicious than a crisp salad, a mild country cheese, and Dalmatian wine? One can taste the basic excellence of these things perfectly, and enjoy their flavours, whereas no man can fully appreciate all the tastes and sauces of a grand dinner, even if the original ingredients are good, which they rarely are in cities.

One should feel hungry twice a day, but almost everybody who can afford to do so eats too much; and sleeps

too much, on soft beds. But now I was very tired, and nodded off in the wheezy little train, in my clothes, and awoke at four in the morning thoroughly refreshed.

Glorious day was coming. As we wound our slow way up a mountain pass, the still-hidden sun, also mounting, struck a snow-peak suddenly, turning it in a flash from pearl to crimson. Above the snow rode a full moon. With a whistle we entered a tunnel; and that dawn had joined all those others that since the beginning of this old world have "flattered the mountain-tops with sovereign eye."

At the station in Serajevo I met a veiled lady (nowhere else in Europe but in the Moslem districts of Jugoslavia do you see the Turks as they were, before Atatürk unveiled the women and debagged the men)—a veiled lady in a tailor-made coat and skirt, with smart English-looking shoes, followed by two fair-haired little boys, carrying buckets and spades. Her veil was so thin that it was an ornament rather than a concealment. She opened her handbag to tip the taxi-driver: there was lipstick there. Over her shoulder were slung a Leica camera and a Thermos flask. She was bound for a seaside holiday. Strange mingling of East and West! Would she, I wondered, come out of her *purdah* on some Adriatic beach, and sip *apéritifs* in a backless bathing dress?

In the Hôtel d'Europe I found fresh crisp rolls (how rarely cooks trouble about such things) and coffee with whipped cream. On the stairs of this excellent hotel there is a notice requesting guests not to spit, but there is a spittoon on every landing.

At the risk of cloying these pages with superlatives, I must say that Serajevo is enchanting and unique. A hundred mosques, with their graceful domes and minarets, are scattered in the green cup of its mountains: it preserves the dignity of more spacious times not only in its

architecture, but in its people. In form and feature the Bosnian is a splendid type of humanity.

A veiled woman entered a mosque which I was visiting, and spoke to me in gentle and fluent German. She was selling lace caps and embroideries. I bought some at random, observing her delicate hands, with a tiny spot of henna at each finger-tip. The veil may have been a lure for tourists; but, like most cynical thoughts, this one is probably wrong. After all, tourists do not swarm to Serajevo. She is perhaps a widow, too proud to live on her relations, and supporting herself by her needle. She has the hands of an artist, and we parted with profound salaams. Often I wonder whether Fate is being kind to her. . . .

At the corner of the street where the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife received their mortal wounds a tablet has been placed in the wall:

"On this historic spot
Gabriel Princep
announced liberty
on the day of Vedov
15 (28) June 1914."

Opposite, where a bridge leads across the Miljacka River, the Austrians had erected on one side a statue of the Virgin, and on the other a bust of the Archduke. Both have been removed.

Princep and eleven of his companions of the Black Hand lie in a cemetery in the suburbs. Princep's grave is raised higher than the others, for he is the "hero" who started the World War. People come to burn candles at his shrine, and it has been a place of pilgrimage for fifteen years.

The making of Jugoslavia entailed the destruction of

two Empires and untold suffering for untold innocents. But to the Serbs, as also to the Czechs, Poles, Lithuanians, Latvians, and Finns, the Great War gave back their native lands. In 1914 all Serb idealists and intellectuals were revolutionaries. They believed in war as an instrument of policy. So do most of the peoples of this part of Europe, who know that they could never have won their freedom without it.*

A hideously unnecessary number of people died in the Great War, because the same result might have been achieved—apparently—with far less suffering. But that is true of almost everything which man accomplishes. There is always a simpler way, but mankind rarely finds it. All over Europe this tragic fact is written in the names of brave men dead.

I talked of this to a young friend in Belgrade, while walking in the Kalemegdan—surely the finest park in Europe—on the bluff overlooking the junction of the Save and Danube. He was a quarter Croat, a quarter Albanian, and wholly Slav in temperament, so that his imagination took the wings of literature and philosophy instead of being tied to the earth of local politics. I was grateful for this relief. His views on Dr. Stoyadinovitch were cautiously expressed, but he told me that he admired Mr. Gandhi, and that the people of the Balkans felt themselves to be more Asiatic than European. He said also: "Tides of conquerors pass, but the women of a country remain." I have heard the same observation in India more than once, and it is a truth that conquerors rarely remember.

Most Serbs look on Western European civilization as the Yogis do at Rishikesh, with a tolerant disdain. They see its good side, but they consider that on the whole its disadvantages outweigh its virtues.

The Turks used to call the Kalemegdan the *Fikr Bair*,

* See Appendix V.

or Mount of Meditation. As we walked through its gardens that evening it resounded with the tinny voice of loud-speakers. I was shocked that an artistic people, not yet mechanized to the brink of insanity, should desecrate the twilight with jazz, but I was wrong. The broadcast stopped five minutes before sunset, and silence fell upon the crowd.

Other races, who shall be nameless, might have made a restaurant here, where they could cackle and drink; but these Serbs stood silent, some alone, some with friends or lovers, at the edge of the bluff where the rivers meet, watching a red sun setting over the lowlands of Zemun, whence the Germans had invaded their country in the winter of 1915-16.

To-day there are stormy seas to navigate before Yugoslavia can be brought to a safe anchorage. The Pact with Italy and the Treaty of Friendship with Bulgaria were good moves; and one can be thankful that the Government is continuing the late King Alexander's policy of opposing Bolshevik and Grand Orient influence. Communism is unpopular in Yugoslavia, for 78 per cent. of the population are agriculturists, with no taste for collectivization of farms or the liquidation of *kulaks*. On the other hand, King Alexander's centralization of power is not working well, owing to the various minorities who desire independence. The Croats, after 100 years of Austrian rule, are far better educated and—to be frank—more civilized than the Serbs. In Zagreb one hears talk of "those brigands in Belgrade," and anyone who knows anything of the history of this part of the world must admit that even a stronger term could be applied to the activities of the Black Hand.

These 4,000,000 Croats, with 103 deputies in the Skupsktina, cannot be considered a minority: they demand autonomy as a right, and are likely to get it. Dr.

Marchek, their leader, has lately made ominous references to the growing power of Germany. The Croats do not love the Germans, but they are becoming exasperated with the Serbs. It is a situation full of explosive possibilities. Then there are the Slovenes, and the Bosnians, who are claimants for greater freedom, and the Magyars—468,000 of them—who demand to return to their native Hungary.

Prince Paul has done much to make the minorities in his country feel that the Serbs are aiming at co-operation, not dominion, but he has a difficult row to hoe. How much freedom is it possible to give them while preserving the integrity of the Yugoslav State? I devoutly hope that my country will not become unduly involved in these complicated racial disputes, which probably only the passage of time can solve.

"Much depends on England," my young friend said. It is a remark the traveller hears constantly in Central and South-Eastern Europe; but it means little except politeness on the part of the speaker, and a desire to see how he will react against Germany.

To-day Germany is somewhat in the position we were in after Waterloo, the most feared and the least liked nation on the Continent, but whereas after Waterloo we were trusted, nobody trusts the Germans. There is a streak of stiff incomprehension about them which makes them intolerable as rulers of any nation but their own.

* * * * *

King Boris, who honoured me with an audience in Sofia, confirmed me in my belief that England has still a rôle to play in the Balkans. I cannot, for obvious reasons, quote his words, but it is legitimate to record that he spoke with great feeling against any coming conflict in South-Eastern Europe. The King has himself served in

both Balkan Wars and in the Great War: he has no desire to see his country dragged into another at the tail of a Great Power. The common denominator of the policy of all the Balkan countries (except perhaps Hungary, with her burning sense of injustice) is the desire for peace.

Certainly there are rectifications of frontiers urgently desired by Bulgaria. The fertile coastal region of the Dobrouja, taken from her by Roumania after the Second Balkan War, where 500,000 Bulgarians live, is a claim whose justice it is impossible to deny. As to the port of Dedegatch, held by Greece, its possession would give Bulgaria an outlet on the Ægean, and would be invaluable to her trade. But we (France and Great Britain) cannot possibly afford to offend Roumania or Greece, and it will be therefore difficult to satisfy Bulgaria, who is now linked by ties of friendship with her sister Slavs in Jugoslavia. And Jugoslavia, being a next-door neighbour to both Germany and Italy, cannot afford to offend the Axis Powers.

Bulgaria's position is difficult, but she has several great advantages. The first is her clever and charming King, a dictator, but a dictator *malgré lui*, who walks freely amongst his subjects, and drives railway engines as his hobby. He speaks eight languages fluently, and has an immense knowledge of European affairs. Never, if he can help it, will he plunge his country into the misery of another war. But he is an able negotiator. One day we may have great need of Bulgaria's help, and King Boris has a loyal army and an united country behind him.

Is it impossible to settle any frontiers except under threat of war? I am an optimist. Obstinate I cling to the hope that one day we shall have an understanding with Germany, and a conference (ominous word!) at which a re-settlement of the Balkans shall be arranged

along the lines of race, language, and the desire of the inhabitants, rather than according to strategic frontiers.

Such a settlement would involve surrender of territory on the part of Jugoslavia and Roumania in favour of Hungary, and also the cession of the Dobrouja to Bulgaria. Dedeagatch might become an open port, with special rights guaranteed to Bulgaria. Is any country really strengthened by the inclusion within its borders of people longing to throw off an alien yoke? Surely not! And surely it is not impossible, given goodwill, for the wit of man to devise a plan which would reduce the minorities of South-Eastern Europe to manageable proportions?

Given goodwill. We can decide nothing in the Balkans without the co-operation of the Axis, either now, if it is wise enough to recognize our immense latent strength, or later, if we must put the matters in dispute to the test of war.

In the Bulgarian Parliament (the Sobraniye) there is complete freedom of speech, and the public galleries are always crowded. In the Bulgarian Press, on the contrary, there is a strict censorship, so nothing disturbing is ever reported. The system works well: the politicians blow off steam, and the caravan passes on. . . . The Government party are described by the wits of the capital as 93 sheep without a shepherd, and the Opposition, which consists chiefly of ex-leaders, as 67 shepherds without sheep. There are 8 Communists, but only 2 of them are allowed to sit in the Sobraniye: the other 6 refused to kiss the Cross when taking their oaths, and were consequently excluded, after a tumultuous sitting. There are also 11 Fascists, led by a striking personality, Professor Tsankov, a tall man with a goatce and bald Brahminical head. I saw him enter the Café Bulgarie one evening: he was accompanied by a detective and a police dog, and I observed that he took a seat with his back to the wall.

When he was Prime Minister, in 1923, he crushed the Macedonian terrorists, and again, in 1925, he suppressed with great severity the Communist conspiracy which led to a horrible outrage in Sofia Cathedral. He is a personal enemy of M. Gregori Dimitrov, the (Bulgarian) Secretary-General of the Comintern, and is also said to be "wanted" by the Grand Orient. . . . No wonder he sits with his back to the wall.

The Bulgarians appear to be a gentle people. They live mainly on milk and vegetables (there are fourteen vegetarian restaurants in Sofia), and they are famous for their strength and long life. One would imagine that they had had enough of fighting, from 1908 to 1918, but appearances are deceptive. A week after my visit the Chief of Staff of the Bulgarian Army was shot dead outside the Sobraniye. Fingers are quick on the trigger everywhere in the Balkans.*

* * * * *

In Roumania, also, with her 1,700,000 Magyars and Germans in Transylvania, her 900,000 frightened Jews, her 500,000 Bulgarians, and her 500,000 still-obstreperous pro-German Iron Guard, dangerous passions exist below an apparently contented surface. I found the following notice by my bedside in the Splendid Park Hotel: †

"In accordance with the Law for Maintaining Public Order we would call the attention of guests to the necessity of

* When I was in the Skupshtina in Belgrade I was told: "Things have been quiet lately. It is three years since anyone shot at the Prime Minister." On that occasion the would-be assassin missed his mark; but in 1928, Stephan Raditch, leader of the Croat Opposition, was not so fortunate, for he was murdered during a sitting of Parliament.

† Which is neither splendid, nor a park, but a decent modern hotel.

avoiding political meetings or discussions in the hotel. In the event of non-observance of this rule, we shall be obliged to request the guest, or guests, to give up their accommodation immediately."

Of course nobody obeyed this injunction. A member of the Iron Guard sat with me far into the night, drinking plum brandy and shouting so loud that I had to close the shutters. I thought the dictatorship of King Carol was comparatively mild, but I have been reluctantly compelled to revise my opinion since the shooting of the imprisoned M. Codréanu and his followers, "while attempting to escape." At the same time we are not entitled to criticize King Carol hastily. There is no death penalty in Roumania, and in existing conditions it may have been necessary to remove Codréanu for the sake of the safety of the country.

In 1937 two members of the Iron Guard, who had been killed fighting for General Franco, were brought back to Bucharest and given a public funeral. The whole capital turned out to see the procession, and it is said that King Carol, à la Haroun-er-Raschid, mingled in disguise amongst his people. What he saw convinced him that Codréanu was becoming much too popular, and that if there was any dictating to be done he had best do it himself.

In this decision he was probably right. I believe Codréanu to have been an honest man. His followers consider that he was a Christian saint, and that he has been done to death by a Jewish clique round the King; but if he was a saint he had peculiar ideas about the commandment "Thou shalt not kill," and his anti-Semitism would certainly have mobilized all the democracies of Europe against him. Under the circumstances King Carol is a much better dictator. He is playing a risky game, of course, but he enjoys it. He is a good speaker, and has

the hereditary Coburg talent for administration. A publishing house and a wine business are both directed by him, and both are making a profit. The army is well equipped. Public life is being cautiously but genuinely purified. The Orthodox Church is behind him. Education has been put on a practical and largely technical basis. Sanitation is making great strides. A spirit of enterprise and reconstruction is evident in Roumania, and youth is being enlisted in the service of nation-building.

I saw a parade of five thousand Boy Scouts and Girl Guides. Prince Mihai, the Heir-Apparent, was amongst the former: he is a fine upstanding lad, adored by all Roumanians, who is being democratically educated with a group of boys chosen from all classes and from all parts of the country. If anything were to happen to King Carol, he would preserve the stability of the throne.

The Youth Parade which I witnessed, opened with the five thousand children kneeling and singing the Lord's Prayer on their knees, led by deep-voiced, hirsute young deacons of the Orthodox Church: *Tatal nostru carele esti in ceruri*. It was magnificent. I hope that there were Germans and Italians present to see the beauty of the scene. The priests in Roumania are mostly fine-looking men, handsomer and more athletic than the clergy of other countries.

* * * * *

In Athens I had the privilege of an audience with King George II of Greece, and I spent some time with General Metaxas, through whom the dictatorship in Greece is administered. Like King Boris, King George and his General are dictators only from a sense of duty; and it would be laughable, if it were not tragic, to read in our Left-Wing Press the accusation that they have set themselves up as tyrants. Only those blinded by prejudice

can represent the King and General Metaxas as anything but hard-working servants of the public, discharging a dangerous and rather thankless task.

Communism was a serious threat to Greece in 1936. The trouble had been brewing for a long time, for the Comintern wanted to have a foothold at this end of the Mediterranean as well as in Spain, and had financed revolution liberally. We need not again enter into the old story of how a "revolutionary situation" is produced: strikes and riots had made orderly government impossible. The result of the elections of January, 1936 (for once fairly held), was a balance of power between the majority parties, in which fifteen Communists held the casting votes. After another seven months of confusion, King George dissolved Parliament, in August, 1936, with the universal consent of all parties except the Communists, and appointed General Metaxas to clear up the mess. Within a year this countryman of Ulysses had swept the Augean stable of political jobbery and incompetence.

Everyone except the professional politicians, and a few political journalists, rejoiced in the decisive measures taken by the new Government. To-day eighteen deputies are under detention, living on islands which would be considered paradises by a less fortunate people than the Greeks. The Metaxas Government made far fewer arrests than had been made in previous revolutions, and nobody was executed.

In the land which invented democracy it would be too much to say that the dictatorship is universally popular. But even those who are against it in theory will admit that in practice, under present conditions, it is a necessary evil. "I was a Venisclist," said an acquaintance, "and I hate the present censorship. I detest the idea that I may not say what I like to my friends, sitting in the café of an evening. But I must admit that things are better in

Greece than they have ever been in my lifetime." He added that he hoped that Greece would one day open her Parliament again, because politics saved one from the boredom of day-to-day life. But the majority of Greeks are not of my friend's opinion. Veniselos was far more ruthless than Metaxas. Most Greeks would agree with Mussolini (if they did not detest him, as they do) that "democracy is a kingless régime infested by many kings."

"We shall never go back to the parliamentary system," General Metaxas told me. He is a sturdy, broad-shouldered man of sixty-seven, with a quiet, convincing manner. "A system like that of Portugal may be the best for us, but it is too soon to say. We have only been two years in office, and we are too busy correcting the mistakes of the past to prophesy about the future. We keep an open mind, and are in close touch with the people."

"But how?" I asked. (Stupidly, when I come to think of it. The Americans have evolved elaborate methods of sounding the public mind, for commercial as well as political purposes. Expert investigators can state with considerable accuracy what Fifth Avenue or Main Street is thinking, or Boston or Oshkosh. Nowadays there need be no mystery about the mind of the public. As Oscar Wilde said of Woman, it is "a Sphinx without a secret.")

General Metaxas smiled, and did not answer my question directly. He rose and opened the window. A fan was already livening the air.

"Our Government is popular," he said, "otherwise it would not exist. The Greek people could never be held by force. Facts have shown them that they are better off now than they used to be. We gave jobs immediately to all our 2,870 workless veterans. Last year we were

able to give 8s. 6d. to every unemployed man for Christmas, instead of 1s. 8d., as previously.

"In the first six months of 1936 strikes cost the workers 159,000,000 drachmas (£295,000). Since then there have been no strikes. We have introduced the eight-hour day, Sunday rest, holidays with pay, reforms which were long overdue and which no political party had been able to carry through in the welter of parliamentary intrigue. Before August, 1936, the average wage of workers was 1s. 6d. a day; it is now 2s. 4d. This is still too low, but nobody can deny that the workers are better off.

"Under the previous governments the Communists were deliberately stirring up mass discontent. That is over. The political genius of the Greeks has recognized the futility of class warfare."

"What do you consider the most important of the reforms you have inaugurated?" I asked.

"That is difficult to answer," the General replied. "Everything was to do in August, 1936. We have tried not to neglect any of the urgent problems. We had to create an air force and anti-air-raid organizations, for these were practically non-existent. We had to re-equip the army, and we have done it without raising a loan. There was shocking disorder in our finances and in our industries. One of the best proofs of the return of public confidence is that savings bank deposits have increased by three milliard drachmas (£5,500,000). Government securities are constantly rising in value."

General Metaxas is a man of figures rather than rhetoric. I talked to him for an hour; he kept to facts, and made no prophecies or generalizations. One generalization, however, it is safe to make about present-day Greece: the country *as a whole* is contented, and is prospering as it has never done since the days of Byzantium.

The same is true of Turkey, where an amazing transformation was wrought by the genius of Kemal Atatürk. This new vitality is noticeable everywhere except in Istanbul, that loveliest and most sinister of cities, which is to be tidied and town-planned in due course, but which nothing short of a cataclysm can deprive of her air of ruined majesty and her superb profile of domes and minarets.

It was full moon when I arrived, and I at once took a caique to row up the Golden Horn. To the left rose old Stamboul, where I once lived as a prisoner of war, and to the right the lights of garish Pera. What memories Stamboul brings, not of my own adventures, of which I am tired, but of illustrious history! Here the seed of the Renaissance lay fallow. Here Suleiman the Magnificent held court and built his marvellous mosques. And not until 1908 did the pageantry of the Sublime Porte become entirely a thing of tinsel.

At Dolma Baghtche, where Atatürk was living last year, paying the debt which even the great must pay to a flouted liver, the Hamidié Mosque gleams white against the cypressed shores of Europe and the turquoise waters of the Bosphorus, most splendid of sea-roads. Across the Bosphorus rise the misty hills of Asia. . . . From the Palace of Yildiz Kiosk a ghostly procession sets forth. It is the Selamlık of Abdul Hamid the Damned—the traditional ritual progress to the mosque where the Caliph of Islam said his Friday prayers.

Abdul Hamid—as I see him in my mind's eye—is ill and old, but he must not fail to attend Friday worship, for that would be equivalent to an abdication. Punctual to the second, he seats himself in his open victoria, takes the reins, whips up his championing, stamping Arabs. Decrepit though he seems indoors, he handles the ribbons well. In his pocket there is a loaded automatic pistol, with

which he can bring down a running man at thirty yards (and has). Behind his carriage, according to ancient custom, run a pack of courtiers, which include—strange survival from the days when the Ottoman Sultans addressed the Princes of Christendom as their inferiors—two Europeans: a retired British Admiral, and a retired German General, who detest this homage to Grand Turk, but pay it for the sake of their handsome salaries, and the easy life they lead in their wistaria-covered *yalis* by the Bosphorus.

His Imperial Majesty is met by His Highness the Grand Eunuch, carrying the Sultan's slippers, and a dwarf from the Imperial Harem; the latter repeats the traditional formula: "*Maghroullanna! Padishahim serden buyuk Allah var!*" "Be not over-proud, O Padishah! Remember that God is greater than thou!"

Troops cheer, white handkerchiefs flutter, the Sultan salutes the crowd, and passes into the mosque. The Diplomatic Corps light their cigarettes. Another Selamlık is over. . . . And this was happening not thirty years ago!

I spent some hours in the Covered Bazaar, which still keeps something—something more than Baghdad—of the atmosphere of the Arabian Nights. It is an atmosphere of sanity rather than of glamour. There is an air of purposeful quiet about such a bazaar that does not exist in the West. The buyers are unhurried and unworried, and the sellers puff their rose-water pipes, or sip their coffee imperturbably. And how delicious and desirable their wares seem! Persian carpets, saddle-bags, sweetmeats, subtle perfumes, velvets, brocades, amber—one longs to possess them all! The smells of the spices are heavenly. Compare the Covered Bazaar with a department store, and you will see the gulf that divides us. In the one there is an all-pervasive, flat-footed drabness; in the other, and

even in spite of Ataturk's clothes, the men and women are sharply individualized, and you will recognize, if you have travelled in the East, mountaineers, plainsmen, scholars, brigands, peasants, Greek shopkeepers, Whirling Dervishes, Devil Worshipers from Mosul, descendants of the Crusaders, Jews from the Spanish Migration, and Circassians whose daughters have caused men to die for bliss: the whole Near East in pageant, with its carpets and hookas and hashish.

But what a misery has come to San Sofia! I remember it as a place of prayer, with its dim lights, and doves, and rich carpets laid askew, a place of worship and traditions, with eye-enchancing and ear-entrancing harmonies. I used to see soldiers praying there, and used to hear the voice of the Imam sending up to the archangels and saints and Emperors of long ago the resonant petitions of Mahomed, on whom be peace! It was a beautiful shrine. To-day it is a bare Byzantine museum. Archæologists may be interested in the frescoes now uncovered: they leave me cold.

The Turks have good cause to distrust their own and other religious leaders. During the last days of the Caliphate all the ecclesiastical authorities of the Moslem world sided with the Sultan against Ataturk's Nationalists. Nor were their Holinesses the Œcumenical Patriarch of the Orthodox Church, the Bulgarian Exarch, the Armenian Patriarch, the Papal Legate, or the Grand Rabbi of the Jews better disposed to the rebels of Ankara.

To-day, in new Ankara, there is not a church or mosque. When the French wanted to build a private chapel by their Embassy they were asked not to make it too conspicuous, as it would spoil the aspect of the "laicised city." Mullahs going to call the Faithful to prayer may not do so in their robes and turban: they must wear an overcoat and a slouch hat until safely within

the precincts of the mosque. Even visiting Christian clergymen must turn their collars round, disguising themselves as civilians. . . . Yet religion is not persecuted, though its priests may not wear the uniform of their calling. I saw at least a dozen young officers at prayer in the Mosque of Sultan Ahmad in Istanbul, and as many civilians: a small proportion of the city's population, no doubt, but significant in the number of the military. The Turkish Chief of the General Staff is a devout Moslem.

Twenty years ago Ankara was a sleepy little town, famous for its long-haired goats, and its cats with one green and one blue eye. (A couple of the latter are in a cage in Ataturk's model farm, looking as cross as cats always do when unreasonably deprived of liberty.) The old town was huddled along the side of a hill crowned by an ancient fort. Ataturk made it the headquarters of his national movement, and after his victory over the Greeks he decided to build his capital there. There was little water, so he dammed a valley. There were hardly any trees, so he planted a million acacias. It is a proudly planned city now; ugly, to my mind, but impressive. The population has grown from 20,000 to 140,000, and is still increasing. There is a racecourse, with weekly meetings throughout the spring and summer, two theatres, cinemas, restaurants, cosmopolitan hotels, and good shops. I was glad—and rather surprised—to see that the six leading men's tailors in Ankara all advertised that their cloth was genuine English tweed.

But the Turks are busy establishing their own mills and factories throughout the country. A textile industry with modern looms has been started at Kayseri, and another at Adana. There is a silk factory at Broussa, a pottery at Kutahya, coke works at Zonguldak, a sugar refinery at Ushak, and cement, shoes, glass and araq factories at Istanbul; these are all new establishments. The Turks

were always good craftsmen: to-day they are rapidly becoming an industrialized nation.

In an Industrial Exhibition at Ankara I saw boys in a model foundry, boys making furniture, learning engineering lay-out, and building houses; and girls making artificial flowers, modelling hats, cutting-out, cooking. Other trades, such as mining, timber, ceramics, cellulose, and chemicals did not lend themselves to exhibition, but the specimens of handicraft sent from the forty-six industrial schools of Turkey were a revelation of progress.

A boy in overalls and goggles was at work with a welding outfit. Three peasant women, in black—his relations, no doubt—had come to see him in his glory. They stood staring, while he produced a shower of sparks with his oxy-acetylene blower. An hour later I passed that way again. They were still there, regarding him in open-eyed wonder.

I have seen hundreds of factories and industrial exhibitions, from Stalingrad to Stuttgart, and from Detroit to Tatanagar, but I have never been so impressed as I was by what I saw in Ankara. In place of the Anatolian peasant whom I remember, with his baggy breeches and slow wits, a new kind of Turk has arisen, educated, alert, clever with his hands.

In 1930 there were 3,000 industrial apprentices. Now there are 15,000. Turkey is not making the mistake we have made in India, of training up an army of young intellectuals who know about nothing in the world except a smattering of law or literature, and who soon join the ranks of the unemployed. On the contrary, education in Turkey is very carefully adjusted to the technical needs of the country; and vocational experts tour the land, fitting square pegs into square holes.

The Turks have all the makings of a great people, and they have a sense of humour which an Englishman under-

stands. Nasr-ud-din Hodja is a famous character in their literature: many of the stories about him concern his wife, who was a quarrelsome sort of woman. One day a friend met him in tears, walking up the bank of a river. The friend asked him why he was crying, and Nasr-ud-din Hodja said that his wife had fallen into the river, and that he was looking for her body. "But you are walking upstream," the friend said. "Don't you know that she would float down?" Nasr-ud-din shook his head. "You don't know my wife," he groaned.

There is no doubt that the Turks have a sense of humour. They borrowed £10,000,000 from us last summer to buy munitions, and soon afterwards borrowed £15,000,000 from the Germans for the same purpose. Anyone who knows the Turks will agree that their armaments will be turned impartially against anyone who attempts to coerce them or cross the path of their nationalism.

Ismet Inonu, the new President, is said to be even more nationalistic than the great Ataturk. He is a small, energetic little man, hard of hearing, and, unlike his predecessor, of sober and regular habits. Both in the army and in civil life he has acquired a reputation for capacity and honesty. As a negotiator at Lausanne he proved himself clever and tenacious.

But Turkey is not likely to find again a man of the calibre of Ataturk. Underneath a picture of him at his model farm at Ankara, driving a tractor in a peaked cap, there is the following quotation from one of his speeches:

"For seven hundred years we have neglected the peasant, and left his bones in foreign lands, but this country of ours is worth making a paradise for our descendants; and it can be done only by agriculture and economic activity. The arm which wields the sword may

grow tired, but the hands which work the threshers and reaper will grow stronger and stronger."

That was Ataturk's philosophy; and it applies to other countries also. He set his people to constructive tasks. Ismet Inonu will keep them there.

* * * * *

It would be easy to give statistics to show how all the countries of South-Eastern Europe are reforming and regenerating themselves, but more impressive than any figures are the aspects of the Balkan capitals. In Ankara the change is amazing. Sofia has one of the best hotels in Europe. Belgrade has been turned in the last fifteen years from a town of cobbled alleyways into one of spacious and well-planned streets. In teeming, crowded, prosperous Bucharest one feels that one is in a smaller but gayer Paris. In Athens, at sunset on Lycabettus, you can look across to the Parthenon, and seaward to the Phaleron, seeing below you how the cradle of our civilization has grown, until to-day she accommodates 850,000 citizens. In every capital there is pride in the past and confidence in the future, and a desire to improve conditions by brow's sweat rather than by bloodshed.

It is a truism that the Balkans want peace. All countries want peace . . . on conditions. Certainly Germany does. But are her conditions such as must be resisted?

Let us consider Eastern Europe from top to bottom. The story of Memel can be told very briefly, with no important omissions.

Memel was founded by Germans in the year 1252. It belonged to the Germans from the fifteenth century until 1919, when they were deprived of it by the Treaty of Versailles.

In February, 1920, the Memeland was occupied by French troops, who surrendered it, after a very slight

show of resistance, to the Lithuanians in January, 1923. The Allied Powers enquired into this act of aggression, but decided to condone it, provided that the Memeland should be autonomous. But it was never allowed to be autonomous. The Lithuanians changed the name to Klaipėda. To every German surname in the telephone book of the city they added the Lithuanian termination of *-as* or *-is*, making Herr Braun into M. Braunas, and so on. Ridiculous, no doubt, but irritating if it had happened to oneself. . . .

English memories are very short as regards foreign affairs. We do not recollect how Europe kicked the Germans when they were down, otherwise we would not be so surprised that they now hit back. Lithuania cut off all communication between Memelanders and their mother country. Letters in German were not delivered in Memel (which was 85 per cent. German, 4 per cent. Jew, 11 per cent. Lithuanian). The German language was not recognized in the law courts. Only Lithuanian officials were employed in the civil administration. From May 5th, 1934, the Memeland was placed under martial law. One hundred and twenty-six of the leading citizens were arrested, and four were condemned to death for pro-German agitation, but subsequently reprieved.

We did nothing to see that justice was done to the 140,000 German Memelanders. To-day it is difficult to blame Hitler for incorporating them into the Reich without asking our permission or Poland's. . . .

As to Poland, she is a Great Power, with a rapidly growing population of 33,000,000, immense natural resources, and a highly efficient standing army (at any rate when standing on its own ground) of 500,000 men. Without difficulty she can mobilize another million soldiers. Her cavalry regiments are well trained and well mounted.

She has internal difficulties, however. There are

7,000,000 Ukrainians within her borders, who want—many of them—to form an independent Ukraine with their brethren in Ruthenia, Roumania, and Russia. An independent Ukraine would be a nation of 45,000,000 people, with the finest wheat fields in the world, and great resources in minerals and water power. The Poles and the Russians naturally look with extreme disfavour on this movement, and the Germans, also naturally, encourage it as far as they can. But do the Ukrainians themselves desire independence? My information is that the majority of them in Russia, in spite of Communism, prefer to be ruled by the Slav devil they know rather than by the Teuton of whom they have heard nothing good. But this does not alter the fact that a semi-mutinous minority of 7,000,000 people is a thorn in the flesh of Poland.

The next difficult minority in Poland is that of the Jews—3,500,000 red-haired, semi-Slav Ashkenazim—whom the Poles wish to send to the remotest possible part of the earth. You may see them by the thousand in the ghetto in Warsaw, picturesque and dignified figures with their long hair and flowing gaberdines; and if you do, you will wonder what is to be the fate of these poor people. I wish I knew, and could suggest something useful. It is a mistake to suppose that all Jews can adapt themselves to the slick city life of the West: these people still seem to be living in the Middle Ages.

Finally, and the most important problems of all for Poland, are the related questions of Danzig, the Corridor, and the German minority of 900,000 settled along the German-Polish frontier. What arrangements can Poland make with Germany? Danzig and the Corridor have been discussed for years, and before the advent of Hitler all British Pinks were saying that Germany was unjustly treated. Now they are ready to make us fight if the sacred soil of Poland is touched.

Fortunately we have only committed ourselves to a general guarantee of Poland as against a German threat of force. We cannot, or at least should not, guarantee Danzig, which is German, or the unjust arrangement of the Corridor by which Germany must pass through foreign territory in order to reach an integral part of the Reich. Nevertheless, Poland has a right of access to the sea. There is no reason why there should not be a German corridor across the Polish corridor, linking Berlin with Danzig and Königsberg.

With Hungary I have already dealt. It is the only country in Europe, except England, where an old aristocracy has retained some of its power. The Upper House in Budapest is a picturesque sight, with 3 Archdukes, 4 Princes, 162 Peers, 19 Bishops, and 1 Grand Rabbi. In spite, or perhaps because, of this aristocracy, Hungary is a fundamentally democratic country; and she is only dangerous to peace because she was so badly treated by the victorious powers after the Great War. By hook or by crook she will work for the return of her 1,700,000 Magyars in Roumania and 600,000 exiles in Yugoslavia.

The Balkan rulers—Prince Paul of Yugoslavia, King Boris of Bulgaria, King Carol of Roumania, and King George of Greece—speak English as well as they do the languages of their own countries. They have close ties of blood with our Royal Family, and many intimate English friends. Our influence in the Balkans exists, and will remain, unless we come to a serious quarrel with Germany. In that event these rulers would have to make a painful choice. Paul might be compelled by geo-political considerations to side with the Axis Powers, against his will. Boris might have to follow suit. Carol would sit on the fence, if so permitted. George would be on our side.

But the situation in the Balkans is very difficult and delicate. King Carol is certainly not pro-German (in spite of his ancestry), nor is he pro-Russian; he is devoted to his country, and would like to be strong enough to snap his fingers at all exploiters. To-day Bucharest has come into the limelight as the focus of the *Drang nach Osten*, and we shall have to make up our minds exactly how far we mean to allow Germany to go, and how to stop her if she goes too far.

The question is not easy. Possibly, with the help of France and the problematical help of Russia, we might so far strengthen Roumania that she would definitely ally herself with us. So also with Jugoslavia. Given large quantities of war material and money—not promises, but metal and active credits—with a binding pledge that we would quickly send troops, Roumania and Jugoslavia might align themselves in an anti-German *bloc*. But let us not deceive ourselves about the result. If the Axis Powers felt that their trade was being strangled, such a policy would lead to a world war.

A recent week-end rumour with regard to Roumania throws a curious light upon anti-German activities in England. Immediately after the German march into Bohemia we heard—by streamer headlines in the majority of Sunday newspapers—that Germany had delivered an ultimatum in Bucharest, demanding that Roumanian industries should be abolished (!) and that Roumania should become entirely a producer of raw products. Under these conditions Germany would guarantee to take all her surplus wheat and oil. If she refused, then German troops—we were told—were massing on her northern frontiers, ready for invasion.

On the strength of this fairy-tale the British Government lost no time in cabling to its diplomatic representatives in Poland, Jugoslavia, Greece, Turkey—and most unfor-

unately also Russia—asking what help they would give us in resisting such aggression. A few hours later, however, it was learned that the report had been emphatically denied in Bucharest and many other capitals, including of course Berlin, and that negotiations for a German-Roumanian trade agreement (since signed) were proceeding normally. At that time Germany could not have attacked Roumania even if she had wished to do so, for she had no troops beyond Brünn and Bratislava.

The folly of asking Russia to co-operate in any arrangement in which we hoped to include Poland and Greece needs no emphasis to readers of this book; and one must suppose that the British Foreign Office was acting under orders to please the Left-Wing supporters of the Government when it asked for the help of the U.S.S.R. Russia cannot easily be invaded by Germany, and, in the improbable event of being attacked and defeated, she could always retire to the Urals, where her main munition centres are. It is obvious that the U.S.S.R. will encourage Europe to a conflict on the largest possible scale, but that her participation will be confined to picking up the pieces when the captains and the kings depart.

Although, as I have said, Germany's position in Central Europe and the Balkans is not as strong as it seems on paper, ours also would be weak in the event of an attempted blockade.

Roumania and Jugoslavia are both riven by internal dissensions. Either country might collapse under the strain of a war, and it would be very difficult to keep Jugoslavia supplied with munitions unless the Adriatic were free of hostile submarines.

Can we detach Italy from the Axis? Would Spain remain neutral if we entered a war in alliance with Russia? Are we in a position to safeguard these Balkan countries from the destruction of their capitals by air-power? It

would be a bold man who answered these questions in the affirmative.

On what line, then, and for what purpose, are we prepared to make a stand? We cannot keep entirely clear of Europe, much as I wish it were possible, but neither can we legitimately maintain the *status quo* in the Balkans, Danzig, and the Corridor. In those matters we should demand to be consulted, together with France, of course; and if we were not consulted, and Germany were mad enough to drive ahead with threats and tanks, then we should declare war. Nothing else would be possible. We should declare war, and we should attack Italy first, because she is more vulnerable, turning the whole weight of our arms against her, unless she came in on our side. But before this calamity can be contemplated—this nightmare of destruction—we must make it abundantly clear to the Axis Powers that we have no desire to block their legitimate commerce.

In the end—even if there is to be war, which I do not believe—we shall have to return to Mussolini's original idea of a Four-Power Pact. There can be no real settlement in the Balkans without the co-operation of Germany. We must convince her, on the one hand, that absolute dominion of South-Eastern Europe would be intolerable to us, and, on the other, that we do not mean to starve her trade or encircle her. As to Roumania and Jugoslavia, we must remember that Italy is no more anxious than we are to see Germany predominant in these countries, and that she can use methods of persuasion with her partner likely to be more effective than our protests.

Germany is a great nation who cannot be denied living room. (What she can and must be denied is *indefinite* expansion.) She needs the trade of the Balkans, not its territory. She buys twice as much from South-Eastern Europe as Great Britain, France, and the United

States together. She can afford to buy the wheat, the iron-ore, and the tobacco of these countries at prices above world prices on her barter system. She can also threaten *not* to buy from them, and, as the share of any individual country is only 2 or 3 per cent. of the total German import trade, she has an enormous economic power, which cannot possibly be denied to her 80,000,000 people.

In 1938 Bulgaria sent 50 per cent. of her produce to Germany, Jugoslavia and Roumania each 33 per cent., and the defunct Czecho-Slovakia 20 per cent. These figures are likely to be greatly increased under recent agreements. Jugoslavia, for instance, is sending 60 per cent. of her produce to Germany. But the percentages are not so conclusive—important as they are—as the command exercised by Germany over the Danube.

A Danube barge can take about four trainloads of goods—say 360 waggons—and a tug can pull three to five barges, so that a tug is from twelve to twenty times as efficient as an engine. Germany commands the headwaters of the navigable Danube, which is to be linked by an enormous canal system with the Atlantic. She has far-reaching and far-sighted plans for the development of the Balkans, and the Balkans unquestionably need development. In the long run (given peace, of course) we shall benefit as much as anyone from the higher standard of living and increased purchasing power of these countries. We own a large share of the earth ourselves; are we to adopt a dog-in-the-manger policy about the remainder?

When diplomats talk, they always have armies, navies, and air-strengths at the back of their minds. This is quite inevitable. It is regrettable that the law of the jungle should prevail in human affairs, but it does, to a very large extent. Christianity has done a little to redeem us from savagery, but only a little. It is no use shutting our eyes

to the facts, and pretending that they are otherwise. This is an age of steel, when the weak go to the wall. Let us redeem our age, by all means, but we shall never do that by make-believe.

If we are to take a part in settling Europe, we must be strong. Let us take as small a part as we can, consistently with our honour and safety, for we have immense and to us far more important responsibilities overseas; but if we talk of settlements let us talk in the language which Europe understands—that is, in armies, navies, air-fleets.

There are many *imponderabilia* in the situation, many nations sitting on the fence, many almost irreconcilable interests to be brought together, but the task can be done, by experts, in privacy, so long as mutual suspicion can be allayed. That is the question. Can suspicion be allayed? Not if we refuse every request of the dictatorships for revision, and then raise our hands in horror when they take what they can by force. For the rest, man to man, point by point, diplomats could hammer out the peace of Europe which we all desire.

CHAPTER X
ARRIBA ESPANA!

When a long train of abuses and usurpations evinces a design to reduce a people under an absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such a Government, and to provide new guards for their security.

*Declaration of the Independence of the
United States, 1776.*

A TRAVELLER entering Spain from Biarritz is confronted immediately with wrecked Irun, whose empty shells of houses, twisted wreckage of girders, and mountains of rubble, stand as witness to the blast of Communist destruction which passed over the city.

It is the same at Eibar, which was dynamited before the Anarchists left it. Thousands of these *dinamiteros* escaped across the French frontier, were sent to Perpignan, where their arms were returned to them, and travelled thence to Barcelona, to continue the war for another two years.

At Durango, where the Dean of Canterbury saw the bombing of the Church of Santa Maria, I was fortunate in meeting the Rector of a nearby church (St. Michael the Archangel of Yurreta-Durango), who had also witnessed the tragedy. What the Dean did not know, or omitted to state, was that up to within ten days of the bombing—some witnesses said a week—the Church of Santa Maria was used as a store and market. No Mass had been said there since September, 1936, until just before the bombing in February, 1937, nor anywhere in Durango except at the Convent of the Jesuit Fathers, where a thousand Basque Separatist soldiers were living.

The church of my informant (St. Michael's) was used

as a munition dépôt from September, 1936, until the end of February, 1937. Neither the Rector nor any other priest in Vizcaya ever dared to appear in public except in plain clothes during the Red occupation. At the time of the bombing of Durango there were 3,000 Red troops in the town. How could the Nationalists be blamed for deaths which occurred under these circumstances, and in a town so close to the front?

I met the Rector of St. Michael's quite by chance. Other persons I questioned fully confirmed his statements. There is no possibility of witnesses having been "planted" for my edification. Incidentally, my enquiries both at Durango and Guernica convinced me that Nationalist rule in Vizcaya is very lenient. Everyone spoke to me fully and freely of what had happened, and only once was I stopped by a policeman and asked to show my papers.

I spent a long time in Guernica, piecing together that tragic story. The original Nationalist communiqué that the place was not bombed was a mistake: it was thought that the reports related to April 27, when, in fact, there was no flying owing to bad weather. Guernica was bombed intermittently for about three and a half hours on the afternoon of April 26, 1937. How many bombs fell and what destruction they caused it is now impossible to establish, and the evidence of "eye-witnesses" some five or six miles away, or of civilians hiding in cellars, is obviously unreliable. All the witnesses I questioned stated that the place caught fire, that the fire brigade arrived from Bilbao, and that it was sent away again by the Red authorities.

Now Guernica was a nodal point in the Red defence, being the gateway to Bilbao, and the junction of four important and three lesser roads; and a concentration of 3,000 Red troops was expected to occur on the 26th.

(These troops arrived, in fact, on the 27th, and more troops passed through Guernica that day and the next, retiring towards the Iron Belt. The Nationalists entered on the 29th.) Two battalions of troops were living in a vacated convent near the town, and there were arms and munition factories in the neighbourhood. The Nationalists had every right to bomb, burn, or otherwise destroy a vital military objective five miles from their front line, and if any civilians suffered it was the fortune of war, or the fault of the Republicans for not evacuating them. They could not expect to be immune from air attack in Guernica.

Guernica was certainly bombed by the Nationalists, but it was also dynamited and burned down by the Anarchists, and then used for propaganda purposes. The Basque President, Señor Aguirre, gave himself away when he wrote to the newspapers: "They have sought to wound us in the tenderest part of our feelings as patriots, showing once again what the Basque race has to hope for from those who do not hesitate to destroy even the sanctuary wherein are enshrined the centuries of our free democracy. . . . The German planes reduced the Holy City of the Basques to ashes."

Now Guernica was not reduced to ashes. Neither the Sanctuary nor the Tree of Guernica was damaged. Less than 100 people were killed, and about 50 houses were destroyed. This has been fully proven by the official enquiry of the Nationalists.* It has been proven, also, that at eight o'clock at night, when the bombing was over, less than a quarter of the town was burning, that no effort to extinguish the fire was made, or permitted, by the militia, or by the Bilbao fire brigade, when it arrived at 9.30 p.m., *and that explosions and fires continued*

* *Guernica*, with an introduction by Sir Arnold Wilson. Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1938.

throughout the night and following day, April 27th. After all, what possible object could the Nationalists have in antagonizing, more than necessary to win battles, the people they were soon to rule?

What convinced me (but there are many other proofs) that Guernica was destroyed chiefly by *dinamiteros* is that the whole of one side of a street below the Casa de Juntas is gutted, while the other side stands intact, save for one house which was bombed, but not burned. How could aeroplanes destroy buildings along a straight line of over 200 yards?

A few miles north-west of Guernica a real atrocity occurred, of which little has been said. At Munguia stood the big Church of Santa Maria, used as a dancing hall by the Reds, with an inscription over the transept: "May Franco die as Mola did!" When the Anarchists retreated, they left a hidden mine, with a time fuse. Forty boys—a squad of young Requetés—were sweeping up litter, cleaning the desecrated altars, and some of them were climbing the dome to hoist the flag of Spain, when a terrific explosion buried them all. For hours their cries were heard by the terrified villagers, but they could not be rescued from the ruins. Even when I saw Santa Maria, two months later, the work of clearing had been only half done. There were bodies of children still buried there.

The world has rung with the "horrors of Guernica." Would that the world took note of the methods of Moscow!

Until I went over the battlefields of Bilbao I had no idea of how consistently the Reds used non-combatants as pawns behind which to manoeuvre. For instance, in a letter from the Spanish Embassy in London, which was given great prominence in a London newspaper, it was stated that "the rebels are bombarding the road from Bilbao to Santander, killing thousands of women and chil-

dren," and the demand was made that "England shall assist in the evacuation of the children, the women, and the old men," because "Bilbao will never surrender." We know now that at the time this letter was written 20,000 Anarchists were escaping along the Bilbao-Santander road, and that when Bilbao surrendered thousands of Basques welcomed Franco's troops with joy.

The Government forces had time to prepare eighty miles of a complicated and expensive system of fortifications, and they had time to prepare the destruction of practically every bridge and culvert round Bilbao. But they had no time to remove women and children from the war zone.

The same sinister use of women and children is evident in the 1939 retreat from Barcelona. Perhaps there is no more disgusting spectacle in history than the heroics of Dr. Negrin to the rump of the Cortes. "We shall never surrender!" he cries in the safety of a cellar at Figueras. Then he takes a car into France, leaving 250,000 refugees mixed up with the retreating army. In London, meanwhile, the Republican Embassy issues a statement (January 27th) that "the fall of Barcelona neither alters nor weakens, but rather strengthens, the determination to resist foreign invasion which the Spanish people took two and a half years ago." In France, Dr. Negrin is forbidden to conduct his political activities, so he returns to Madrid, still the faithful agent of the Comintern. But even the Republicans are now weary of his eloquence and incapacity: he and his henchmen, including La Pasionaria and four Russian officials, embark in an aeroplane and escape once more to safety, leaving the Republican soldiers to sanguinary conflicts between themselves, until Franco's troops bring bread, and sanity, and justice.

So many astounding lies have been told about the Nationalists that it would seem useless to attempt to deny

them in detail. But when the Leader of the Liberal Opposition (Sir Archibald Sinclair) solemnly states in the House of Commons that "the most terrible atrocities are being committed by airmen under General Franco's orders," and that he has information that they "have dropped chocolate boxes in the streets of Spanish towns, and when the children have gone to pick them up, the boxes have exploded in their faces and blown their hands off,"* one feels that comment is almost unnecessary.

The British public may be gullible, but surely few of us imagine that infernal machines can be made to fall from a height and look like boxes of confectionery after impact, and not explode, yet explode when a child opens them. Conceivably they might be sent down by parachute, though one would think a child would look with suspicion on such a contrivance, and even so the question remains why does Franco employ his Air Force to mutilate children? When these objections were raised by the member for Oxford, Sir Archibald Sinclair said that "he preferred not the hypothetical reasoning of Mr. Hogg, but the actual statement of the two ladies who had gone out to Spain, worked there, and had given their stories in public, and the Duke of Atholl, who had a name of honour and had made the statement in a letter to the public Press. That was his evidence and he stood by it." We must leave Sir Archibald standing.

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Living was very cheap in Nationalist Spain during my visits to the war zones. In crowded Salamanca eggs were 11d. a dozen, and beef 1s. a pound. A dish of cuttlefish stewed in its own ink (a delicacy greatly prized by Spaniards, which tastes to me like rubber) cost 1s. In

* *The Times* Parliamentary Report, March 1st, 1939.

Trujillo I enquired the price of a sucking-pig for sale in the market-square: it was 1s. 3d.

General Franco's administration behind the battle-lines was an earnest of his success as a ruler in peace-time. The organization of Nationalist Spain was a magnificent piece of work. Citizens went about their business amidst well-stocked shops. Taxis plied for hire. In the north they played pelota. There were Sunday bull-fights in many cities, and immense reserves of everything: men, food, faith. I began to realize then what lies I had been reading in England; for the truth about the liberated districts of Spain was not hard for a visitor to discover.

Travelling from San Sebastian to Salamanca, one could not fail to note that living was easy, and the people happy. It was Sunday when I arrived in Spain. From the Church of the Good Shepherd in San Sebastian thousands were emerging after the last Mass, and the streets and the cafés were crowded. Burgos was packed with people: the restaurants overflowing.

As far as the eye could reach, on the great plains that stretch from there to Salamanca, and beyond, bumper crops were being reaped by a sturdy, healthy, well-dressed peasantry. (Although at work on this day of rest the children's clothes were spotless, and the women's hair beautifully combed.) Everywhere the corn lay spread for threshing, and over it circled mules and oxen in immemorial fashion. The harvest was piling up in every village. Only at Torquemada did the work appear finished; there, along the graceful twisting bridge that leads to the birthplace of the Grand Inquisitor, boys and girls were strolling in their Sunday best. At Duémas, near Valladolid, which had recently suffered from an air-raid (it is an open village, undefended), the inhabitants had cut a gigantic "Viva Franco!" on the hillside, to defy the Republicans to do their worst.

It was twilight when we stopped to slake our thirst at Valladolid. When we came out of the café the grand old square was packed twenty and thirty deep by people listening to a speech over the wireless by the Generalísimo. Was this crowd being coerced? Was its interest feigned? I do not think any sane person who saw what I saw could have doubted that Franco's movement was rooted deeply in the hearts of the people.

The day following my arrival in Salamanca, a parade was held at which the Italian Ambassador presented his credentials to General Franco. Crowds surged in the magnificent Plaza Mayor. One saw the Moorish cavalry in their white robes of ceremony, riding splendidly caparisoned stallions, young Requetés with their red berets, recruits with the yoke and arrows of the Phalanx embroidered on their sleeves, magnificent old men in flowing mantles: it was a scene of pageantry straight from the story of Leon and Castile. All Spain is steeped in tradition: now its history lives again.

My first sight of General Franco was at this reception, and although I did not speak to him then, I was able to observe him closely. He is only 44, and looks young for his age. Cares sit lightly on him. He has the reputation of never being worried. Most Spaniards have an extraordinarily graceful and dignified carriage, and Franco is no exception. His feet and hands are small, and his body active, though thick-set and deep-chested: his brown eyes are mobile and expressive. It was strange to think that this man had served so long in the Foreign Legion, and won such a reputation amongst his comrades there. There seemed nothing "tough" about him, yet he had been wounded in the desert, twice decorated for gallantry, and was the youngest General in the Spanish Army. In the scarred and one-armed Millan d'Astray or in the hard-bitten Queipo de Llano one could see the heroes of *Beau*

Geste, but Franco was all sparkle and smiles, joking with the Ambassador about the barrage of camera-men that confronted them.

Some weeks later I was privileged to meet him, but first I travelled south and east. In Seville I interviewed General Queipo de Llano. When a member of my party asked him to tell the amazing story of how he took Seville with 180 men, he answered: "That's ancient history! You gentlemen must be more interested in to-day and to-morrow! Are you going to tell your people that the French are sending a thousand men a day across the Pyrenees?"

He took us to his map-room and explained how he intended to capture Jaen. He is an extraordinary personality: powerful, energetic, religious, romantic, lovable. (And our Press was representing him as a hiccougging bully!) Obviously he is descendant of the men who carried the banners of Spain to the New World.

Had he really revealed, I wondered, his coming plan of operations? Time proved that he had not; but I think he told us what he would have liked to do.

I met an English business man resident in Seville who asked me what the devil our Press was playing at. And the B.B.C.? "They will ruin British trade," he said, "if they go on telling such lies. The people worship Queipo here, especially the poor, and nobody has been hurt who wasn't a murderer or a thief. You will see for yourself what Malaga is like when you go there, then you will realize from what we have been saved."

I did. When I went to cash a cheque in Malaga, the cashier—an Englishman—leaned forward and said: "I hope you are on Franco's side?" On hearing that we were, he told us of the terror through which the residents had lived. What he said we confirmed from other accounts, and from the evidence of our eyes.

Lists had been prepared of the leading Nationalist

sympathizers. On July 19th, the day after the revolution broke out, the mob was sent to the houses of some fifty selected victims. These places were burned and pillaged, and the inhabitants were shot, knifed, axed, or burned alive—men, women and children.

The houses were mostly on the fashionable Caleta, running eastward from the port along the shores of the Mediterranean. Between their blackened walls and trampled gardens other villas are standing, serene and unmolested, for they belonged to Red partisans, or had been required for Government purposes. The results of that day of wrath were there for all to see. The Popular Front in Spain executed a long-prepared and cold-blooded scheme of Terror. The mob was never out of hand. It was deliberately directed against the persons and property of its opponents.

Within twenty-four hours the burning and looting ceased, and mass executions took their place. How many people were shot and shovelled wholesale into pits has not yet been ascertained, but they numbered at least 10,000. (In Madrid at least 50,000 were murdered, and in Barcelona more than that number. The total of Communist murders committed in Spain is believed to be 300,000, but it will be some time before the world can learn the exact figures.) There was no trial; merely an order from one of the gangs which controlled the city—Anarchists, Trotskyists, Marxists, or the several kinds of Socialists. Mere children, armed with sawn-off shotguns, committed many of the early murders in Malaga.

The Caleta Palace Hotel, where we stayed, had been the headquarters of the Red Aviation staff. It is intact, for it had been used to house some 120 officers, of whom we were told that half were Russians.

One of the waiters, who had been compelled to serve the Reds, but had escaped from them during the panic

caused by the Nationalist advance, told me that women of the town sat drinking with the officers night after night: citizens of Malaga were starving, but the officers were never short of wine or meat. For three and a half months the hotel staff received no wages. When the airmen left the hotel it was so filthy that it took a week to clean with the aid of a fire engine and disinfectants.

So also in one of the parish churches adjoining the Cathedral, which had to be whitewashed three times, except that there there was destruction as well as dirt. The Cathedral was not burned, but was used as a hospital, and was in a filthy state when the city was captured. In the neighbouring chapel the reredos and organ were torn down, and the high altar and side altars had been dynamited. Tombs had been dug up, pictures slashed, the head of a statue of the Virgin was carefully sawn in half. This particular mutilation impressed me more than the others, because of its laborious and lunatic hate.

In January, 1937, the *Diluvio* of Barcelona declared: "One by one the rats of the Confessional will be sought out by our terriers, their lairs destroyed, and their nests set on fire." These terriers of Communism, to judge by the third-degree cells discovered in the Convent of San Juan in Barcelona (converted into a prison in 1937), had been trained in the most modern methods of persuasion known to the Comintern.

The construction of these special rooms at San Juan, where confessions were extracted from political suspects, was quite simple, and at first sight not very alarming. The floor of the cell was covered with bricks set on edge, so that the prisoner could not lie down or walk about except in acute discomfort. The bed was of concrete and set at a slope of twenty degrees, which tempted a tired man to doze, but as soon as his muscles relaxed in sleep he would roll off and fall on the bricks. The walls were

painted with white dots and diagonal lines in a jazz pattern. A metronome ticked out the seconds day and night. That was all . . . and nicely calculated to produce acute neurasthenia.

Specialists from the G.P.U. in Moscow observed the men and women confined in these places. The prisoners entered barefoot, or in obstinate cases entirely naked. Bright lights were turned on them for hours at a time. Sleepless, hypnotized by the tick-tock of the metronome, maddened by the cubist designs, and constantly questioned, the inmates of these cells gradually—sometimes quickly—lost their mental balance. They did not go mad. There was no violent torture. That would have been useless. The object was to break wills, not bones. One sees how in a week or two, or a month, or a year, the directors of the prison could achieve almost any results required. . . .

However, more drastic punishments also existed. There were cubicles too small for prisoners to lie or sit in any comfort, yet just large enough to induce them to make the attempt. There were electric chairs, in which stubborn people were questioned while voltages of varying intensity were passed through their bodies. There were little cellars where captives dosed with castor oil were placed to writhe in their own excrement. And there were rooms where men were hung up by one leg and swung to and fro, their heads just brushing through a trough of water. Some half-demented individuals are still alive who endured these horrors. But to me the confession cells are better evidence than any "ordinary" cruelty of the carefully planned work of the Comintern.

It was to a Government that permitted, indeed that must have approved of, such things—for this hellish prison was built with elaborate care—that Mr. Attlee, Miss Ellen Wilkinson, and Mr. Noel Baker went, visiting

hospitals, factories, trenches. Little they knew of what was happening in the Convent of San Juan when they attended a meeting of Anti-Fascist Women "in favour of the unification of Marxist Parties," or when, at a reception at Madrid Town Hall, they gave the clenched fist salute while "God Save the King" was played in their honour. On their way back to Valencia, Major Attlee addressed a British battalion of the International Brigade, named in his honour, and declared that the party was "impressed by the organization and spirit of the Spanish people."*

Atrocities may sometimes be exaggerated or even faked (though in Spain, alas! there are too many living witnesses to leave any doubt that bestial cruelties occurred), but what exaggeration can there be about material destruction? The ruins are there, or they are not. Would that my wishful-thinking friends, who hate to see dictatorships successful, could see the desecrated churches and dynamited houses of Southern Spain!

Would that they could see, also, a large room at Salamanca containing documents seized when the Nationalists entered Bilbao. There is there a telegram from Comrade Dimitrov, appointing certain individuals to certain positions in Vizcaya. There is a telegraph book showing the cables sent from Bilbao to all parts of the world; most of them are to Moscow, asking for advice or supplies. There are piles of mimeographed news-sheets, sent daily by air mail from the Kremlin to the newspapers of Bilbao. To me the most interesting find in this room was a correspondence between an English M.P. and a journalist in Bilbao who excelled himself in describing the Guernica affair. Amongst other striking passages the following occurs: "With regard to Spain, I have taken new and very vigorous action, and in the

* *The Times*, December 8th, 1937.

form which I hope may produce results. It is, in my view, really there that the best hope lies, as I have always told you. Here I have tried to make trouble of every kind, and I think in some directions I have been successful."

Trouble of every kind! This gentleman means well, I believe, in that he is at heart a patriot, but he pursues his policies with reckless ignorance. He and his friends are making us hated in half Europe.

On my way to Toledo I passed through Trujillo, the country from which came the Conquistadores. It is a grand, bleak upland, with brigands, wild bulls, lovely children, and boys who gave us the Fascist salute. The tall peasants have the bearing of hidalgos, and their tall wives, carrying jars on their heads, walk like conquerors. The ancestors of these people dominated Europe for 150 years. Their blood and language continues in South America, and to-day on that continent their victory is making a profound impression. At the Eucharistic Congress held at Asuncion, the capital of Paraguay, in 1937, crowds cheered General Franco and his armies as the saviours of Christian civilization. In the Argentine there were "Fascist demonstrations" (in reality pro-Christian and pro-Franco demonstrations) at Santa Fé, Parana, Rosario, Cordova, Tucuman, Mendoza, San Juan, and the great capital of Buenos Aires; also at Montevideo in Uruguay. General Franco's victory has increased the already large influence of Spain and her allies in Latin America, which is by no means enamoured nowadays with the Monroe Doctrine. But these matters are beyond our European province. . . .

* * * * *

The story of Toledo is already history. One should visit the Alcazar as it is (and soon this will be impossible,

for it is being rebuilt) in order to understand how 1,100 men (with 520 women and 50 children) withstood a seventy days' siege by 10,000 attackers, who dropped into the fortress 11,800 shells and 500 bombs, and exploded three enormous mines.

In Colonel Moscardò's office I saw the bullet-splashed walls, the sandbagged windows, and the telephone into which his famous words were spoken.*

Perhaps the most impressive place in the Alcazar is the patio at its centre, where in the early days the garrison played football, and upon whose ramparts, when the last great mine exploded, an assailant planted the Red flag, only to be hurled down into the smoking ruins below. Meanwhile, in an underground gallery next to the stables a woman lay in childbirth. When the explosion occurred she gave birth to a boy, who has since been made an honorary cadet of the Alcazar.

Toledo is unforgettable, and the last great conflict to be waged round its fortress is symbolic of more than the Spanish Civil War; it will live, when the truth about it is known,† as one of the immortal stories of the world, part of the heritage of mankind.

On the evening of my visit to the Alcazar I dined at the Venta des Aires, where in the gay old days a venerable couple kept the best restaurant in Toledo. People used to motor over from Madrid to enjoy their cooking. Senor Aires was seventy-three when the siege began. He had

* The Reds held Moscardò's son a prisoner. They offered to spare his life if the Commandant would surrender the fortress. Moscardò asked to telephone to him, and said: "My son, you can pray for us, and then die like a Christian!" He was duly shot.

† *The Epic of the Alcazar*, by G. McNeill-Moss (Geoffrey Moss). Rich and Cowan, 1937. This carefully documented account, with its many sidelights on the character of the Spaniards, should be read by all whose pulses stir to deeds of heroism and chivalry.

built up his restaurant entirely by his own skill, from nothing, and he was a Monarchist. The Reds shot him and left him on a dung-heap. His old wife told me of the murder, with tears streaming down her face.

That night, sleepless in a cold bed, my mind kept turning over the events of the siege. I thought of the scene, so well described by Geoffrey Moss, where Largo Caballero, until lately one of the heroes of Left-Wing England, stood with a group of camera-men to watch an attempt to blow up the defenders of the Alcazar with their 570 women and children. True, the non-combatants had been offered a safe conduct to Red territory, but so were all women and children in Republican Spain offered food and shelter behind the Nationalist lines. When Caballero sends Russian aeroplanes to drop high explosives into the Alcazar, and three times tries to blow it sky-high, he is conducting military operations. Admitted. But when Franco bombs Barcelona the British Government telegraph an indignant protest because some women and children have inevitably been killed. Again, just before the advance to Barcelona, we telegraph to Franco asking him to be merciful to his opponents. How strangely our advice will read in the light of history! . . .

Presumably Lord Halifax did not know then of the torture prison in Barcelona (even if our Secret Service had reported it to the Foreign Office, it might well have escaped his attention in the press of events), and he could not have known that the prisoners confined there would be taken by the Republicans towards the French frontier as hostages, and that at Pont des Molins on February 7th the Republicans would shoot the Bishop of Teruel and forty-one other elderly men, innocent of any crime except anti-Communism.

In the sight of God the life of a bishop is doubtless no more than that of a butcher, but to us his liquidation can-

not but seem more dramatic: it serves once again to remind us of our extraordinary tenderness towards the régimes of the Left, especially as his murder is only one of a round dozen of Spanish bishops. When the Jews in Germany had their shops looted and synagogues burned, our condemnation was loud and bitter, but the atrocities of the anti-Fascists seem to arouse no general indignation. "The Bishop and those who were shot with him," we read in *The Times* of March 6th, 1939, "formed part of some 800 Nationalist prisoners who left Barcelona as General Franco's forces advanced on the city. After forced marches towards the French frontier with little rest, and after being cruelly treated by their military escort, many of the aged and infirm fell exhausted. On reaching a point about fifty miles from the French frontier, one of the Republican leaders was in favour of shooting them all. Eventually they passed Figuéras and reached the small village of Pont de Molins. France was only ten miles away. Here the order was given that all men over fifty years of age were to stand aside from the marching column of prisoners, according to the evidence of a prisoner who was in the column. The Bishop of Teruel was included in those separated from the main body of prisoners. A shepherd heard the shots being fired, and the forty-two bodies were later found. With the Bishop perished a Canon of Teruel Cathedral, a Lieutenant-Colonel of the Civil Guard, a Captain of the Legionaries, and Colonel Rey d'Ancourt. These were the only bodies which could be identified amongst the charred remains in the ravine where they were found."

Yes, our advice to Franco will read strangely in the light of these events.

* * * * *

On the Madrid front, near Quatro Vientos aerodrome,

I saw a captured Russian tank. Its crew were buried in a shallow mound nearby; bits of the officer's uniform were still lying about, and a hand protruded from the mound, with long nails. It is a grim business, fighting in a tank under the Spanish sun. You sit on a little leather saddle, huddled into a very cramped space, with machinery all about you and a periscope close to your eyes. When you shut the turret and start the motor, the temperature may already be above blood-heat. It will mount rapidly as you roar towards the firing-line. Sometimes a sliver of molten lead splashes through the armour. The noise is hideous, the air foul with fumes. Always the temperature mounts—to 120 degrees Fahrenheit, to 150, to 180, to the limit of human endurance.

The man in the machine is in a nasty position, but so also is the man in the trench. Only seasoned troops can face massed tanks advancing in échelons of ten (as they did at Brunete), firing two-inch shells and twin machine-guns simultaneously. Yet a story is told of a small camp follower of the Regulares who was so light that he could climb into olive-trees which would not have borne the weight of a full-grown man. Tanks would pass under him unsuspectingly, then he would jump down and throw a bottle of petrol, followed by an incendiary bomb. The Russian caterpillar tracks are of rubber, heavily greased. There would be an explosion, and a sheet of flame would flicker round the doomed machine. In this way he demolished five tanks during a fortnight's fighting.

Moors are experts at these bottle-and-bomb tactics. In one battalion there was almost a mutiny when some anti-tank guns arrived; the Moors felt that the tanks were *theirs*; they didn't want them poached by outsiders!

How long will nerves stand the strain of modern war? One would have thought that the effect was cumulative, but it is not. Amongst Spaniards there have been few

cases of shell-shock. Being bombed or bombarded at long range is horrible, for one has no chance of hitting back, but even so a city continues its normal life under constant air-raids.

No one, however, gets accustomed to being killed or to going hungry; and air-power is especially effective in disorganizing the supply services, whether of a city or of an army. On the Ebro the Republicans were dislodged by the consummate skill with which General Franco and his Generals concentrated fire-power on a narrow sector and pierced it, thus turning the enemy's flank. There was severe hand-to-hand fighting, but only at the vital points. Once a break-through had occurred the Republicans were compelled to retreat, and were not sufficiently disciplined to keep their cohesion. In the north, on the contrary, there was practically no hand-to-hand fighting. Both sides were brave, or rather both the Nationalists and the Basque Separatists were, but owing to intensive fire-preparation the Basques were nearly always driven out of their positions before the Nationalists advanced, especially in the Iron Belt, whose concrete lining made it a death-trap when hit by high explosive.

At Brunete, which I visited a few days after the battle, the ruins of the village were still strewn with the discarded harness of war, including many Russian bayonets and French carbines, and piles of Czech ammunition. There were 45 prisoners in a house nearby, of whom 30 were French and 5 Czech. I saw also some British prisoners. (One of them said: "My name is Levi. I'm a Canadian!") On my return to Salamanca I met a French representative of *Le Journal*, who told me that 15,000 Frenchmen had already fallen in the Communist cause. So far no official figures have been published of foreign intervention, but there is no reason whatever to suppose that there have been more Germans and Italians

in Spain than there were French, Czechs, and other "anti-Fascists." (I deal with this question below.)

* * * * *

And so back to Salamanca. Two Moors, in white cloaks, tall, impassive, with white-gloved hands crossed upon their rifles, guarded the turn of the staircase that led to Franco's office.

It was a big, comfortable room, but probably indicative of the taste of its owner, a Bishop, rather than that of the Generalissimo. A long table carried Michelin Guide maps of the war fronts. Franco led us away from these (I went with two companions) and said something agreeable to my friends. To me he talked of the film "Lives of a Bengal Lancer," which he told me he had enjoyed.

He was very courteous, but grave now. (And no wonder. A battle was in progress. He was governing half Spain, and commanding three armies.) I could see why he had been called "El Serio" in his youth. But his brown eyes had not lost their glitter, nor his walk its buoyancy. We spoke in French.

"You will have seen for yourselves," he said, "the trail of havoc and misery that our enemies have left behind them. I hope you have also seen something of our work of reconstruction. You ask about the future. Of course, you will understand that this is no time to talk of Utopias. However, one thing I can tell you definitely. We shall not return to the Parliamentary system. It may be good for other countries, but for us it has been an unmitigated curse, opening the door to class hatred and foreign intrigue. Our system will be based on Portuguese or Italian models, although we shall preserve our historic institutions in so far as they may contribute towards our nationality and our unity. The régime will not be of a particularly military character. Those of us who have lived in contact with the working classes, and slept with soldiers on the hard ground, know the needs of the people better than do the old-fashioned politicians.

"We shall allow no parasites. Every Spaniard will have to work according to his capacity. The labourer is worthy of his hire, and will receive an absolute guarantee that he will not be a slave to capitalism, provided that he does not adopt the methods of class war, which make collaboration impossible. We are fighting for a State which will be like one great family, without overlords or serfs, plutocrats or proletarians, and in which all the elements that go to make the national wealth will be represented.

"It is a great task, this building of a New Spain, but before it can be accomplished, we must finish the war. We should have finished it long ago, I must tell you, if it had not been for the 36,000 foreigners in the International Brigade at Madrid. We have had a stern fight, and it is not over yet, but I know that nothing great can come to birth without a struggle. I wish your country were more wholeheartedly on our side. You English are kind to animals. It sometimes surprises me that your hearts do not go out more fully to our people in the sufferings they have endured."

Was there a trace of sarcasm, I wondered, in the Generalissimo's reference to our kindness?

I asked him what was the most useful thing I could write about Nationalist Spain when I returned to England.

"Facts," he answered. "I am told that you have seen something of Spain. Write the things which you have seen. Then England may understand what we are fighting for. It is quite simple."

Simple, and impressive, I thought as I left him; remembering the Voice that commanded the author of Revelation to "write the things which thou hast seen. . . ."

Before meeting Franco I had searched Salamanca for a good photograph, that I might ask him to sign it. It was unobtainable. I found an engraving but no large photograph. The shops of the capital were full of fervid Führers and declamatory Duces, but the Generalissimo of the Nationalist Armies appeared chiefly on a picture-postcard, smiling.

It is sometimes said that the neglect and wickedness of past generations of Spaniards led to the Civil War. This is a half truth. Grave abuses there were. Two-thirds of the land of Spain belonged to 2 per cent. of the people. There were 2,000,000 landless peasants in the South. Landlords neglected the peasantry. Corruption was general. Some priests were idle, and some were evil, but the Catholic Church in Spain as a whole was admitted—even by its adversaries, when they were honest—to have done more than the Government in the education of the poor. Doubtless Communism would never have flourished if Spain had been well governed, but the crimes committed during the last three years were not individual acts of anger; the majority can be proved to have been planned and organized by a scientific application of Terror.

Let us be clear on this point. I do not say that there were not sincere Liberals and good Christians on the Republican side; still less that there were not many injustices which should have been put right. But the influence of Communism, acting through the Popular Front, was not to remedy wrongs; its influence only produced chaos and cruelties without parallel except in other Communist revolutions.

As long ago as 1920, at the Second Congress of the Comintern, Lenin declared that "the second successful Proletarian Revolution, with the help of the armed Proletariat, will occur in the Peninsula." In 1921 a Communist, Ramon Casanellas, murdered the Prime Minister, Don Eduardo Dato, but escaped to Russia, where he found service in the Soviet Army.

It was after the fall of the Monarchy, however, in 1931, that Communist penetration began in earnest. In that year *El Mundo Obrero* was started in Madrid, with Communist support, and quickly reached a circulation of 35,000 copies.

"The new Republican Government," Miss Godden tells us in her admirable book *Conflict in Spain*,* "was not a month old when it showed its characteristic inability to restrain violent attacks on religion and on property." On May 10, 1931, the Jesuit Church of the Calle de la Flor in Madrid was burnt, also the Convent and Church of the Carmelite Fathers in the Plaza de España, and the College of the Sacred Heart in Chamartin. All over Spain riots and incendiarism began.

Dr. Gregorio Marañón, the famous Spanish scientist whom I have already quoted, writes of this time :

"I remember that a few days before the burning of the convents in May, 1931, I was strolling in the evening behind three people who were talking politics in a loud voice. They were Communists, and the note of confidence and the hope they expressed would have impressed me if I had not been so thoroughly convinced that the national ideology was resistant to Bolshevik tactics. The day of the fires convinced me that I was wrong. The propaganda, though underground, had been enormous, though the actual number of adherents to Communism was very small. At the first general elections only two or three of their deputies were returned—how many times we were told this to calm our fears!—but the three hundred columns of smoke which ascended to heaven in all the towns of Spain on the same day and at about the same hour, under conditions of peace and with no provocation in any way commensurate with such a barbarous retort, all this carried out with a technical skill quite unknown to the Spanish people, demonstrated that the foreign organisation existed and was impetuously making its first attacks.†

* *Conflict in Spain*, by G. M. Godden. Burns Oates and Washbourne, 1938. This monograph, and Professor E. Allison Peers' *The Spanish Tragedy, 1930-1936* (Methuen, 1936), give the facts of the situation in clear and impartial form. Reading Professor Peers' book, one is impressed by the talent and energy expended in sterile debates in the Cortes, and one feels that perhaps only the physical clash of doctrines could lead to a lasting peace in Spain.

† *Liberalism and Communism*, by Dr. G. Marañón. Spanish Press Service, London, 1937.

In eight months there were four Governments in Spain, and none of them governed, owing largely to the hidden but powerful influence of the Communist Party, which numbered at this time 12,000 members.* On New Year's Day, 1932, four policemen in the little village of Castilblanco were brutally murdered, their heads being bashed in and their eyes gouged out. On January 9th the Comintern sent £50,000 to Spain. In March a Communist Congress met at Seville. (Amongst others who attended was the murderer Ramon Casanellas.) The Church of San Nicolas in Granada was burned in August. In the autumn a procession of the Blessed Sacrament at Cagollo de Veja was fired upon: a woman was killed and seven people wounded. Experts in Moscow noted that "the mass movement is seething, and showing tendencies to develop into an armed revolt of the people."†

After two years of Left-Wing government (under Señor Azana, then Prime Minister, and lately President of the Republic) new elections were held, in November, 1933, and resulted in a victory for the parties of the Right. This was a temporary set-back to the Communists, and their displeasure was marked by a rising *tempo* in violence. All the familiar symptoms, which we have studied in other countries, manifested themselves in Spain: burnings, bombings, strikes, and murders, accompanied, as usual, by sexual propaganda amongst the young. Professor Peers tells us that "pornographic literature was promi-

* Less than the membership of the Communist Party of Great Britain, which was 16,000 in 1938.

† "Sinouldering" would be a more accurate verb than "seething." The idea of burning is always associated with Communism. It figures in Weishaupt, the father of Illuminism, and was popular with the French Terrorists of the Revolution, and revived by the Nihilists. The Generals of the Commune, Brunel and Bergeret, set fire to the centre of Paris. In Spain we have seen that the retreating Republicans left always flaming ruins in their wake.

nently featured in kiosks and bookshops, and, with Marxist literature, was sold outside the very entrances of the churches."

In October, 1934, quite suddenly (to the Spanish public, but not to directors of the class war in Moscow) revolution broke out in Barcelona and in Oviedo. Seventy cases of ammunition were landed in Bilbao, from Russia. Subscriptions raised by "voluntary levies for the Spanish workers" in the Soviet Union amounted to £400,000. In London the *Daily Herald* announced (two days before the revolt began) that Señor Gil Robles was planning a Fascist *coup d'état*. When the outbreak occurred it was described, in the usual way, as the defence of democracy against dictatorship.*

In Barcelona, Señor Companys proclaimed a Catalan Republic. (It is believed that Communists threatened to shoot him unless he did so.) The revolt was quickly suppressed, and both Señor Companys and Señor Azana, who was in Barcelona at the time, were arrested.

In the north events took a graver turn. The storm-centre of revolution was Oviedo, where the Cathedral, the University, and other buildings were burned. The rebels were fully armed, and provided with tanks, machine-guns, armoured cars, and large quantities of dynamite.† They stole £300,000 from the Bank of Spain in Oviedo, set fire

* At this time the Government was a coalition between the Radicals under Señor Lerroux and *Acción Popular* under Señor Gil Robles. The latter, far from being a Fascist, held views at least as moderate as those of Lord Baldwin. The extremist organisations of the Left, which openly supported Communism, were (a) the Socialists, or U.G.T. (Union General de Trabajadores) (b) the Syndicalists, or C.N.T. (Confederación Nacional de Trabajadores) and (c) the Anarchists, or F.A.I. (Federación Anarquista Ibérica). In the Cortes the Right and Centre Parties had 374 seats, the Left 99.

† *The Spanish Tragedy, 1930-1936*, by E. Allison Peers. Methuen, 1936.

to 730 buildings, and wrecked whole streets. Amongst the many victims were 27 priests, of whom one was burned alive. The total casualties (including those on the Communist side) were 1,335 persons killed and 2,951 wounded. Weapons taken from the insurgents included 89,000 rifles and 33,000 pistols.

This revolution, against a lawfully constituted Government with a Right majority of 275 members in the Cortes, met with no reprobation from the Left-Wing Press in England, or from the duped public of the United States. Señors Azana and Largo Caballero were heroes in 1934 resisting Fascist oppression. Not so General Franco, who had the temerity to resist a Left-Wing "Government": he was a rebel deserving death.

Shortly before the Asturias rising, in 1933, M. Yvon Delbos, then French Foreign Minister, wrote of a visit to Moscow: "Special rooms are devoted to the future Spanish Communist Revolution, displaying posters of newspapers, portraits of Castilian Bolsheviks, scenes of riot, arson, barricades, executions. . . . It seems that the Soviets reckon upon achieving success amongst our friends on the other side of the Pyrenees. These rooms breathe a strange atmosphere of faith and fanaticism, and seem to reek with the smell of blood. They are not a place where one can learn to love one's fellow-men. This obsession of violence, stigmatized in the enemy, but extolled when put to the service of the Revolution, is one of the essential features of Bolshevism."

Yes, blood, and burning, but always, of course, in defence of democracy!

For two months Spain was under martial law. All the forces of the Left—Socialists, Communists, and Anarchists—now united in a Popular Front, which rose to a strength of 2,000,000 members. In June, 1935, Señor Jesus Hernandez, the then Minister for Education, reported that

the Popular Front had been organized "in a thousand different forms," and that "the driving force behind this whole movement is the Communist Party, which, working illegally, has managed to imbue the broad masses with the idea of civil war based on class war."

Nothing could be clearer. New elections were held on February 16th, 1936, amidst general excitement. In some places the Communists broke the voting urns (notably at Valencia and Cuenca) and declared that their candidates were elected irrespective of the voting; but even so the result was not such as to justify the idea, still held abroad, that the people of Spain had given a mandate to the parties of the Left. The figures were:

Popular Front,	4,356,000	votes	carrying	270	seats	in the Cortes.
Right Parties,	4,570,000	"	"	140	"	"
Centre Party,	340,000	"	"	60	"	"

Owing to the complicated electoral system in Spain, the Popular Front obtained a majority in the Cortes far in excess of its strength in the country. Not content with this, its supporters acted (and instantly) as if they were already the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. Prisons were opened. Funds were collected for an armed Red Militia. "L'Internationale" was sung in the Cortes by deputies who raised clenched fists in salute to Moscow. The burning of churches began again; one of the first to suffer was the famous shrine of Santa Maria at Elche, where the figures, jewels, and lovely embroideries of the famous Mystery Play were destroyed. Without waiting for an Act of Parliament, the peasants in the south appropriated lands to which, it must be admitted, they had rights in equity. In April thirty young Spaniards who had been trained in the Revolutionary School in Moscow entrained for Barcelona, with flowers and hampers and stacks of revolutionary literature from the Comintern. In April,

also, the *Daily Worker* of London declared that "news from Spain gets bigger and better. . . . Nothing like it has been seen in Western Europe."

In June, General Francisco Franco, who had heard that President Azana contemplated a "democratization" of the army, warned the Government (from his virtual exile in the Canary Islands) that the existing state of disorder would gravely prejudice the discipline of the armed forces of the Republic.

On July 8th, 1936, Senor Calvo Sotelo, an ex-Finance Minister, and one of the most respected of the Right-Wing leaders, read out to the Cortes an account of the anarchy prevailing under the Popular Front. The figures he gave look insignificant when compared with later massacres, but can perhaps be more readily grasped by English people. (We might consider what we would think of a Government that tolerated such crimes in this country, without being able to bring the offenders to justice.) From February to July—five months—160 churches and 79 other buildings had been completely destroyed, 269 people had been killed, and 1,287 wounded. "You have made your last speech!" cried the Communist woman fury known as La Pasionaria. She may have known what was to happen.

Five days later, on July 13th, 1936, at 3 a.m., Senor Sotelo was roused by police knocking at the door of his house in Madrid. Rising, he found a police van outside and an officer with a warrant for his arrest. Having satisfied himself of the *bona fides* of the officer, he consented to accompany him, believing, it is supposed, that he would be taken into "protective custody." He was driven out to the suburbs and shot in the breast and right eye; the body was then left at the East Cemetery.

Later in the day the caretaker at the mortuary rang up police headquarters to say that some detectives had left

a body with him which they said had been found in the streets. It was soon identified as the corpse of Calvo Sotelo.

All Spain was horrified, for, although murders had become common, they had been murders chiefly of priests and other humble Christians. This was as if Scotland Yard had kidnapped one of our leading politicians and done him to death. Nobody felt secure.

On the night of June 17th news came of the mutiny of a number of regiments in Spanish Morocco. "Nobody, absolutely nobody on the mainland has joined this absurd revolt." So said the Prime Minister. But next morning, Saturday, June 18th, the public learned of the wide extent of the rising. General Sanjurjo, leader of a previous *putsch* (on August 10th, 1932), had crashed in an aeroplane on his way to Spain from Lisbon, and was burned to death; but other well-known generals, hitherto loyal to the republic, such as Queipo de Llano in Seville, Mola, the late Director-General of Police in Saragossa, and the veteran Cabanellas, had thrown in their lot with Franco, who arrived in Tetuan on the early morning of July 19th.

In Madrid there were three Ministries in twenty-four hours. (During the fifty-seven months of the republic there had been twenty-eight so-called Governments.) While vapid politicians debated in the capital, Communism had taken control in the country. "The Government does not exist," said Senor Andres Nin.* "We are collaborating with it, but it can do no more than sanction what is done by the masses."

The army in Spain has taken part in many *pronunciamientos*, and could hardly be blamed by any reasonable Christian for making an attempt to end the prevailing

* A Communist leader of Barcelona, afterwards liquidated as a Trotskyist.

anarchy; but, as a matter of fact, the generals concerned in the revolt appear to have acted in haste and with little preparation. (Facts supporting this view will be found below.) But if there was an army plot, it is also undeniable that a Communist conspiracy had long been brewing. As we have seen, trained revolutionaries arrived from Moscow in March, 1936. In April, Senor Largo Caballero gave his public approval to the Comintern programme of an armed rising of the Proletariat. The arms were there, and the men to use them, and carefully prepared plans for the seizure of power.

Some of these plans have fallen into the hands of the Nationalists. That for Madrid, issued as "Confidential Report No. 3," in April, 1936, provided for fifty groups of ten men each. The signal for the rising was to be the bursting of five bombs at nightfall, whereupon a simulated Fascist attack on Socialist headquarters was to be staged and a general strike declared. A special group of machine-gunners and bombers were to attack the Ministry of the Interior along named streets. Other groups would seize the Prime Minister's office, the Ministry of War, the G.P.O., and police headquarters. No. 25 group, composed of Communist sympathizers in the police, was entrusted with the task of eliminating counter-revolutionary politicians and officers.

We have seen this technique of the *coup d'état* in action elsewhere. At the risk of otiosity, I quote from a document published by the *Jornal do Commercio* of Rio de Janeiro on September 30th, 1937, for it describes in some detail what happened in most cities in Spain:

"It is essential to avoid useless and incomplete violence, and to study carefully the type of violence which is most profitable. It is individual initiative which originally produces revolution and makes for its success, because the actors realize that only victory can secure immunity from punishment. Violence should be committed on an agreed plan, and devoid

of all sentiment which does not help the revolutionary ideal. The executive revolutionaries must be precisely trained down to the minutest detail, especially those who will have to work among the soldiers in barracks and among the sailors on warships.

"A trained revolutionary must be ready to eliminate and replace every officer who is not a revolutionary himself. The same procedure is to be adopted in accounting for non-revolutionary sergeants who enjoy prestige amongst the troops.

"The essential character of a successful strike is that it be prepared in secret and be delivered with rapidity and violence.

"The corps of incendiaries has the special duty of starting fires in various quarters of the town by concerted action, so that fire brigades and other Government agents detailed to fight outbreaks of fire may be divided and the consequent confusion increased.

"Useful incendiarism demands an element of audacity and surprise. Two or three men disguised as clerks or other commercial agents, appropriate to the building, carrying inflammable substances, will enter, and while one distracts the attention of the hall porter, another will pour the petrol or place his fuses on the floor in such a manner that he is not perceived, and then yet another comrade will pass and drop a lighted match. In the confusion and alarm caused by the fire, escape will be easy.

"The people who will spontaneously throng the streets must be controlled so as to obtain the following results:

"(a) In the centre of the town: popular manifestations and organized acts of violence; the masses will be guided to attack the headquarters of counter-revolutionary newspapers.

"(b) In the aristocratic and plutocratic quarters the masses must be led to commit pillage and violence. No detail must be omitted to inflame the passions of the people. This super-excited state must be directed in a frankly sexual manner in order to enlist the sympathies of the masses more easily. They must be convinced that all signs of luxury, fine houses, luxurious motor-cars, well-dressed women, etc., are an insult to the misery of the people, whose hour has arrived, and who can, at last, seize all they want without fear of retribution from the forces of the State.

"(c) All prisons must be thrown open and the inmates released without distinction.

"(d) Foreign Embassies, Legations, and their staffs must be strictly respected."

How far the insurgent generals were unprepared can be gauged by what happened at Las Palmas, Seville, Madrid, Malaga, and Barcelona.

I am not in General Franco's confidence, and do not pretend to know what was in his mind when an aeroplane arrived for him at Las Palmas, sent by Spaniards in England, but I have met some of these Spaniards, and know that they were working under conditions of desperate haste and great uncertainty. It would be fair to describe them as bewildered by the chaos descending on Spain, and determined to save their country from Communism, but uncertain to whom to turn. My impression is that General Franco did not throw in his lot with them until Señor Casares Quiroga, the then Prime Minister, ignored his warning letter of June 23rd, 1936. It is possible that Franco had discussed a *pronunciamento* with General Sanjurjo, the potential leader of the revolt, who had visited Germany in February, 1936, and had sent emissaries to Rome. Indeed, it is likely, but I believe that Franco held his hand until he saw that nothing but a military insurrection could save Spain.

From the course of events it is clear that the Generals concerned hoped to be able to establish an orderly Government, on Primo de Rivera's model, without serious violence. The extent of foreign intervention on the part of Russia, who had organized Communist cells in all the big towns,* took them by surprise.

The Englishman who was charged by the above-mentioned Spaniards with delivering an aeroplane in the Canary Islands was told that he must consign it only to

* "Friends of the Soviet Union" and "International Red Help" had branches at Vigo, Corunna, Oviedo, Leon, Santander, Bilbao, San Sebastian, Logrono, Saragossa, Valladolid, Segovia, Madrid, Toledo, Cordova, Jaen, Seville, Cadiz, Malaga, Almeria, Cartagena, Murcia, Elche, Alicante, Valencia, Ibiza, and Barcelona.

a person in possession of a certain password. A Staff officer came to claim the machine, but was ignorant of the password. He had to return to his headquarters to obtain it. Eventually General Franco left in the greatest haste, and when he arrived in Tetuan he discovered that a large part of the navy had declared for the Government, so that it would be difficult to transport troops from Morocco.

In Seville, General Queipo de Llano arrived on the morning of July 18th from Huelva. At the Hotel Simon he met a bullfighter friend, Pepe el Algabeno, who was the leader of a local group of Falangists, and who had promised him 1,500 men from the surrounding districts. (Most of these men arrived too late for that crucial night's fighting.) "Shall I warn my crowd?" asked Pepe. "Certainly," said Queipo. "I am going to have lunch, in case things go wrong. Then I shall put on my uniform and go to headquarters."

Pepe went to gather his stalwarts, and Major Rementeria and Air Captain Carillo arrived. They told him that in the whole garrison of Seville, besides Major Cuesta, of the Divisional Staff, there were "only a few captains and a lieutenant here and there" on whom they could rely. Queipo, be it noted, had not previously spoken to any of these officers, except Rementeria and Cuesta.

Truly it was an audacious undertaking to capture this city, with its sixty thousand Communist supporters, mostly armed, in face of a presumably hostile civil and military administration! "I was aware of the magnitude of the task," the General said later, "but was prepared to see it through or perish in the attempt. I had seen the turn things were taking in Madrid . . . it seemed to me daily more dangerous merely to be seen walking in the street. I felt sure I should be one of the first victims of the mob when it did break loose."

Having put on his uniform (like an English officer, Queipo dresses in plain clothes whenever possible), he went to Divisional Headquarters with his A.D.C., and was shown into the office, where the General Officer Commanding the Division, General Villa Abrille, was discussing the situation with General Lopez Viota and a group of officers which included Major Cuesta. The scene can best be told in Queipo de Llano's own words:

"General Villa Abrille was an old friend of mine, but I had not come away with a very favourable impression on the last two occasions I had seen him. Though he pretended to be a great friend of Labour, he was not really interested in the welfare of the workers; they in their turn, so I gathered from what he told me, treated him with the grossest contempt, which he put up with meekly, in the hope, no doubt, of saving his skin when the final outbreak came. When he saw me come across the patio dressed in uniform, he was surprised and said:

"What are you doing here, Gonzalo?"

"I have come to tell you that it's time for you to make up your mind; you must choose between your brother officers or that Government of yours which is ruining the country."

"I shall always be on the side of the Government."

"Well, I have orders to blow your brains out. But, as I am a friend of yours, I don't want to go to extremes, for I hope you will see your mistake."

"I can only repeat, I am on the side of the Government."

"Then I shall have either to shoot you or lock you up. So I'll lock you up. Go into your room."

"Very good, I'll go; but"—turning to the others—"I would have you remark, gentlemen, that I do so perforce."

"Yes, perforce, but do it all the same," I said, pushing him gently towards the room, which he entered after turning round several times and protesting he was being forced.

"I must admit he acted wisely, for I was determined to shoot him down at the slightest sign of resistance."

"The whole group followed us to his room. When I again bade him reconsider his attitude, and he refused, I told him he should regard himself as my prisoner. Thereupon General Lopez Viota said:

"I also wish to be taken prisoner."

"‘Very well,’ I said, ‘you shall be.’

"‘I, too,’ said Staff Major Hidalgo.

"‘You, too,’ I said.

"All of the group followed suit except, of course, Cuesta. I tore down the telephone wires, and was about to lock the door, when I found there was no key! Thereupon I had a corporal of the guard come with two men, and ordered them to shoot if anyone should attempt to escape; and those young soldiers, who but a moment before would have obeyed General Villa Abrille’s orders, became his gaolers, ready to do as I had told them. They earned their country’s gratitude.

"Cuesta then told me I must go and address the soldiers of the Granada Regiment, whose barracks were nearby; so, whilst Cuesta stayed behind to draw up the Proclamation of Martial Law, Lopez-Guerrero (the General’s A.D.C.) and I went over.

"Colonel Allanegui had won a good reputation in the Moroccan campaigns, and I had been told we could rely on his support. My surprise may be imagined when I found him in an attitude that from the start seemed strange. The guard was drawn up under arms. Were they waiting for me? If so, why, instead of coming forward to receive me, did he remain standing with his lieutenant-colonel, Major Perez, and the other officers at the far end of the square where the guard was drawn up?

"I went up to him and said, as I didn’t know him: ‘I have come to shake hands with you and congratulate you on taking your stand with your brother officers when the fate of the army and the country is at stake.’

"‘I am prepared to support the Government and take orders only from General Villa Abrille,’ he answered curtly.

"Assuming an air of calmness, I said: ‘Shall we continue our conversation over there?’ and we all went into a little room built out on to the barrack square.

"It was so small it would only hold the Colonel, Lieutenant-colonel, Major, and a couple of Captains, in addition to Lopez-Guerrero and myself, so that the others stood outside in the doorway and on the steps.

"‘So that in spite of the way the army and the country is being treated by the Government, you take its side, do you?’ I said.

"‘I do,’ he answered.

"‘Then I shall have to deprive you of your command. Lieutenant-colonel, take command of the regiment!’

" 'I follow my Colonel,' he said.

" 'Major, take command of the regiment!'

" 'I follow my Colonel,' he also said.

" 'Who will take over the regiment?' I asked, turning to the Captains present, only to obtain the same reply.

"Then I told Lopez-Guerrero to go and fetch Major Cuesta. Meanwhile I remained alone with the group of hostile officers. The painful silence was broken after a while by Major Perez, who with tears in his eyes said that they all felt as we did, but that they couldn't forget the sufferings they had been subjected to after the failure of the rising on August 10th, 1932, and were afraid lest the same thing should happen.

" 'There can be no question of that,' I answered; 'here it's a question of victory or death in a very short time, and it's better to die than to live in shame.'

"At that moment Cuesta came in, and I said to him: 'Didn't you tell me that Colonel Allanegui and his regiment would be on our side?'

"Cuesta then spoke to them, but again in vain. I was thinking I should have to use my pistol, when, turning to the officers outside, I asked them: 'Is none of you capable of forming up the men?' No one answered, but one captain, Fernandez de Cordoba, smiled. 'Can you do it?' I asked him. 'Yes, sir!' he replied. 'Then have the bugle sound "Fall in!"' I told him.

"Colonel Allanegui then took a step towards the door. I caught him by the arm and asked him roughly: 'Where are you off to?' 'To harangue my men,' he said. 'You don't stir from here,' I answered. He put his hand on his pistol, saying, 'You force me to use violence.' I seized him strongly by the wrist, and, putting my other hand into my coat pocket, where I had my pistol at the ready, I thundered at him: 'Do you think I am not prepared for every violence?' Then, just as I was about to shoot him through the head, I had a divine inspiration and, lowering my pistol, I shouted: 'All of you are prisoners! Follow me!'

"They marched out behind me, past the guard and up the street into Headquarters, where I had them shut up with the others, all except Major Perez, who, on referring again to the humiliations suffered in 1932, and being assured by me there was no ground for fearing them, went back at my order and took command of the regiment.

"After giving strict orders for a close watch to be kept over the prisoners, I returned to the barrack square, where I

found to my surprise only 130 men formed up. When I was told there were no more I could hardly believe my ears. As Inspector-General of Carabineers I had lived so much apart from the army that I hadn't realized the wretched state to which it had been reduced. Our labour of years in eradicating nepotism had been undone; the commands placed in the abject hands of hirelings; people convicted of larceny, theft, and baser crimes readmitted to the profession; and the ranks reduced to a scale that made regiments veritable skeletons.

"Making an effort to conceal my dismay, I strode up to the ranks. The troops had to be inflamed and, to tell the truth, my words inflamed them. By the time I had finished those troops were mine, heart and soul. Their cheers pealed out like thunder."

There was not a moment to be lost. The Communists had already put three armoured cars on the streets. At any moment they might seize the Arsenal and Treasury. Queipo de Llano ordered a captain to march out with a hundred men and proclaim martial law. He posted a light gun at a street corner, with orders to fire at any armoured car that passed. At the first shot the occupants of one of these cars took to their heels. The other two soon fell into the hands of the insurgents. Sixty men were sent to seize the Arsenal, which contained 25,000 rifles and 8,000 carbines. Being Saturday afternoon, the munition workers were absent, and the place surrendered without a struggle. The Town Hall, telephone building, and Government House resisted only until a battery of artillery began to fire upon them. By nightfall Queipo was master of Seville.

Fighting lasted another three days, but a man who could arrest the Staff Division by sheer force of personality was not likely to be baffled by the problems which remained.

Radio Seville, two miles outside the city, had fallen into his hands early on Saturday afternoon. When the

telephone was cut, he arranged to broadcast. From that Saturday night, for a period of eighteen months, Queipo de Llano's voice resounded through Spain and the Spanish-speaking world.

In Saragossa and Pamplona the army supported the *coup d'état*. Spanish Morocco, Cadiz, and Algeciras were in Franco's hands, and he was succeeding, although slowly, in transferring Legionaries and Moors to the mainland by air. In the naval centres of Ferrol, Vigo, and Cartagena a very confused situation existed, the navy being divided in its allegiance. Some of the crews imprisoned their officers and afterwards crucified them on the quarter-deck.* Others went over calmly to the insurgents.

In Madrid fighting began in the streets on Saturday, July 18th. By Sunday night parts of the city were in flames, and Communists drove about in commandeered cars, giving the clenched fist salute. The Montana Barracks declared for Franco, but were bombarded by Government artillery and surrendered in a few hours. General Fanjul, in command, was taken prisoner and shot. In Malaga the Military Governor hesitated, first siding with the insurgents and then the Government. The Communists, who soon took charge there, tied him to the tail

* The following is the translation of part of a poem published in the Ministry of Public Instruction's *Romancero de la Guerra Civil*, in Madrid, to commemorate the mutiny:

Purged of its traitors now
On the Mediterranean sea
The good ship Jaime sails:
The people set her free!
Her traitor officers
Are swallowed by the waves,
Her gold-sleeved Admiral
His day of rule is past:
To-day the sailor rules,
The man who climbs the mast!

of a mule and dragged him through the streets before killing him. In Barcelona, to which General Goded flew from Majorca, the two factions fought for three days. Eventually General Goded surrendered, and was shot by the Republicans.

General Franco's position on Monday morning, July 20th, was by no means promising. Indeed, it was desperate, but there was no drawing back. He held Vigo and Corunna in the north-west and a strip of country across to Saragossa in the east, with salients down to Caceres and Teruel, but to the north lay the two Basque Provinces, with their munition factories and mineral wealth. All the central and eastern regions were held by the Government, with the treasuries and arsenals in Madrid and Barcelona. In the south he had Spanish Morocco, Algeciras, Cadiz, and a narrow strip leading up to Seville and Cordoba, with an isolated patch at Granada. Nothing else. Nothing except his reputation and his faith. The Government controlled all the institutions of authority, such as they were (including of course the War Office), the £150,000,000 of gold in the Bank of Spain, the police administration, the most important industrial centres, three-quarters of the coast-line of Spain, and nine-tenths of the Navy.*

Communism, with its insurrection in Greece, its penetration of France in the belly of the Trojan horse, under

* The regular army, like the navy, was politically divided between the two camps. Its soldiers consisted of eighteen-year old recruits with six months' training. Officers and N.C.O.'s had been lately "purged" by the Government, so that most key positions were held by persons of Left-wing view. The Tercio, or Foreign Legion of Spain, who followed Franco to a man, was a long-service body of seasoned veterans, nine-tenths of them Spanish. The Moors were—and are—officered chiefly by Spaniards, and contain ten per cent. of Spanish non-commissioned officers. The Guardia Civil, or military police, were—and are—a magnificent body of men, highly paid and well-pensioned.

M. Blum's Popular Front Government, and its successes in Spain, seemed in 1936 to be in the ascendant.

* * * *

I have a row of books on Spain and a suit-case crammed with newspaper cuttings which I shall now never use, as I once intended, for a connected story of the struggle. Within the limits of this chapter we cannot examine the strategy of General Franco, whose brilliant operations will be studied by War Colleges for many years to come, not only because the story is too long, but also because the manœuvres of the Red Horse of Troy, both in the Peninsula and in England, are of chief importance to my theme.

General Franco said to me: "I ask nothing of England, except that you will try to understand what we are fighting for."

Alas, that so few of us have done so! Our Press—I am afraid with the approval of our Foreign Office, but with the honourable exception of *The Times*—has minimized the massacres inspired by the Comintern, concealed the extent of intervention by France and Russia, and exaggerated that by Italy and Germany.

A distinguished American journalist, who had spent two months with the Spanish Government forces in Barcelona and Madrid, told me in Salamanca that in the course of fifty years of travel, during which he had seen eight wars and a dozen revolutions, and met Chicago gangsters, Mexican bandits, Chinese brigands, and all kinds of ruffians, he had never encountered such brutes in human form as the Spanish Anarchists.

For Spaniards generally he had a great admiration. Even Largo Caballero he described as "a dear old gentleman." But the Anarchists, in his opinion, should be caged like wild beasts, or exterminated; and having read the

works of their lunatic prophet, Bakunin, who desired "the reign of Anti-Christ, and the unchaining of all evil passions," and seen something of Anarchism at work, I am inclined to agree with him; at least they should be kept under close supervision. I would add that the distinction between Anarchists and Communists in Spain is largely academic. During the course of the war they have quarrelled between themselves, but at its outset they were united in common desire for murder and plunder.

Small wonder that the Republicans, driven to bay in Madrid, should have turned at last on the people who were the cause of all the suffering in Spain. Unfortunately the chief conspirators have all escaped, and are now doubtless ready to pursue their activities elsewhere, "helping democracy" wherever it is blind enough to give them hospitality.

I did not look for atrocities while I was in Spain; but it was impossible to avoid seeing the trail of Red terror and destruction. Distasteful as the subject is, it must be mentioned here, for it was the sight of a lorry-load of captive Communists at Antequera, on the way to Malaga, that determined me to write this book.

At Antequera, in the mountains behind Malaga, Communists murdered seventy-eight persons between July 18th and August 12th, 1936. Some of them had been soaked in petrol and set alight, others mutilated and violated. "What will you do to these people?" I asked a garage-keeper, indicating the Communists in the lorry. "Nothing," was the answer. "They are mostly half-wits, and have been acquitted of the crimes which were committed here. They will soon settle down." But would they? I wondered. Rarely have I seen assembled so many cowardly, ugly, and vicious faces.

If there were not brave men and good men fighting on

both sides, with the Republicans as well as with the Nationalists, the Spanish Civil War would not have lasted as long as it has. But the idealists amongst the supporters of the Government have had no control over the sub-human forces which they let loose when they opened the prisons and armed 30,000 criminals.

In Malaga I met a girl who was waiting for the trial of six men who had killed her father with an axe, and had wounded her brother, and then finished him by soaking his head in petrol and setting it alight. They had soaked her clothes in petrol also, and wanted their pleasure of her, otherwise there was a lighted match. . . . She was mad with terror, and does not know to this day how she was saved by Franco's cavalry.

There, before my eyes, were the men accused of having done these things. They too seemed half-wits. Could she have invented the story? It is a common story in this civil war, and it was corroborated in this case by the sergeant who had rescued her. I do not know the result of that particular trial, but when I read that 16,000 priests have been murdered by the Popular Front in Spain and some 300,000 other innocent people, the majority shot without trial, and some fiendishly mutilated and tortured, the aspect of those prisoners in Malaga and Antequera comes to my mind.

The things that have been done in Spain are unbelievable here in quiet England. But even in England we sometimes read of a brutal murder or of some horror perpetrated against a child. The culprit is quickly sentenced and passes from sight and mind. But he has existed. He exists. Others like him will no doubt be born. If we freed all our prisoners and withdrew all our police, what would England be like in a month's time?

Have I said enough of this ruthless minority in Spain which has brought the land to ruin and committed so

many crimes?*

Only to-day (February 17th, 1939) I read in *The Times* that sixty members of a Communist battalion, escaped to France, have been arrested at Perpignan with their suit-cases full of the jewels of their victims. Are these the people for whom we desire General Franco to give a general amnesty?

We cannot forget them, but let us reflect that they are not typical Spaniards. Spaniards have a streak of cruelty in their nature, but also a splendid courage (you will see both qualities in a bull-fight), and in this war both sides have been ready to die magnificently for the faith that is in them, crying, "Long live the Brotherhood of the Proletariat!" or "Viva Cristo Rey!"

* * * * *

Since 1931 the Comintern has been intervening in Spain. The French have been intervening since July, 1936, and the Germans and Italians since November or December of that year. We ourselves were not guiltless in 1937, when we protected food ships going into Bilbao.

After General Franco had effected the junction between his northern and southern Armies, Madrid would have fallen to his Legionaries but for the presence of 15,000 men of the International Brigade, recruited and armed chiefly in Paris and Prague, and sent to Spain through Catalonia. In November, 1936, there was no Italian infantry in Spain, and only a few aeroplanes with the Nationalist forces. Indeed, until the middle of 1937 the Russian aeroplanes of the Republicans were superior to any craft with Franco's forces. Even our Left-Wing newspapers have never attempted to deny that intervention

* For documentation, see the *First, Second and Third Reports on Communist Atrocities in Southern Spain*, issued by the National Government at Burgos. Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1936 and 1937.

first occurred on the French and Russian side to save Madrid. In fact, they boasted about it at first.

When the French and British Governments proposed in August, 1936, that arms and war material should not be exported to either side in Spain, the Italian and German Governments urged that the prohibition should apply also to volunteers and to money. The British Government replied, in shocked tones, that being a democratic country we could not prevent our citizens doing what they liked. We have forgotten this. It is right that we should remember. It was not until February, 1937, that the prohibition of volunteers was decreed in London. True, it was disregarded by both sides, but the first foreigners to intervene in the civil war were those assisting the Republicans.

Is it true, the reader may ask, that the Germans have had 10,000 men in Spain and the Italians 100,000? I believe not. I believe it is a lie, but, like many other lies about Spain, it is difficult to nail to the counter. No army will publish its parade-states in the middle of a war. One day we shall arrive at the truth, and shall probably learn that there were approximately equal numbers on both sides, say 40,000 men when at their maximum.

When I was in Salamanca in August, 1937, the Nationalists gave me a written official answer to a question concerning intervention, which ran as follows: "We have under arms some 700,000 men, of whom about 4 per cent. are foreigners, or at most, in round numbers, some 30,000 combatants." I shall be surprised if history does not confirm the correctness of this declaration.

As regards munitions, intervention on both sides has been heavy. Up to the 31st July, 1938, the Nationalists had brought down 809 Russian aeroplanes and 139 French. Russian material captured included 84 tanks, 71 guns, 577 heavy machine-guns, 35,912 rifles, 91,000 shells, 60,425,000

rifle cartridges. French material captured included 24 armoured cars, 85 guns, 112 heavy machine-guns, 29,370 rifles, 22,400 shells, 24,000,000 rifle cartridges. From Mexican sources came 11,250,000 rifle cartridges. Material emanating from Great Britain and the United States was small in amount, and doubtless reached Spain indirectly.

Since this date, and especially in the last Ebro offensive, enormous stores of artillery, machine-guns, rifles, ammunition, and aeroplane parts were captured by the Nationalists, and further immense supplies, sufficient to have continued the fight in Catalonia for many months, were taken by the Republican Army across the passes of the Pyrenees. There is no truth, as the French can now see with their own eyes, in the statement that Franco won his Ebro victory by weight of material. He won:

- (a) Because he applied his strength at the crucial points.
- (b) Because his men had faith in their leaders.
- (c) Because he had a contented country behind him.

Our official attitude towards Nationalist Spain was extraordinary considering that our Government must have known of the dishonesty and diabolical cruelty in the Republican zone, and of the peace and prosperity on the other side. I have said enough about murder: a few instances of Red theft and muddle may be given. In Barcelona the chief electric power undertaking was in British hands, and represented some £20,000,000 of capital investment. It was taken over by a Workers' Committee in August, 1936, and liquid funds to the value of £1,250,000 immediately disappeared. No dividends were ever paid. The Rio Tinto Mines, in the south-west, represent some £10,000,000 of British capital. In the anarchy prevailing before the revolt all work had stopped. Work

was resumed immediately after occupation by Franco's forces in August, 1936, and production has risen since then by 25 per cent. owing to the stable conditions prevailing. Nationalist stability is also shown by the exchange rates of the peseta: the Franco peseta at 41 to the £ compared with the Republican peseta at 100 to the £, but in reality, in a free exchange, the former was worth five times as much as the latter at the beginning of 1939.

The British Government must have known that Franco was going to win, but the British public certainly did not. As to the attitude of our Press, two instances must suffice: they could be duplicated weekly since July, 1936. When Bilbao fell, in June, 1937, a London evening paper had eighty-six columns of reading matter, of which only two half columns, neither of them at the top of the page, related to the Basque capital. One was headed: "*Mussolini exults at fall of Bilbao.*" The other: "*Children not to return to Bilbao yet.*"

On Sunday evening, April 3rd, 1938, General Franco's forces captured Lerida, a key town in the advance into Catalonia, after bitter hand-to-hand fighting. Elsewhere the line moved forward. Towards the south the Nationalists had captured a village within twelve miles of the sea. At Cerbère, on the French frontier, 6,000 Red militiamen, who had been defeated in Upper Aragon, had escaped across the frontier at Luchon, and had been sent back to Barcelona to continue the civil war.

What was the front-page news in the *Daily Mirror* of the following day, April 4th? "*Convict Breaks Gaol to Stop Horse, Saves Girl.*" Other items on the front page were, "*Spelling Bee Beats Sweep.*" (A chimney sweep had failed to spell "condescension" and "moccasin.") "*Only Child Drowned at Play,*" "*Youth Dies in Cinema,*" "*Man Found Stabbed,*" "*Canoe Hits Bridge,*" "*Police Search*

Girl Dancers," and "*Bluejackets Cheer the Duke*." The lighting in Spain was reported on an inner page, under the headline, "*Guns, not Guts, give Franco his Victory*," and there was only an incidental mention of the fall of Lerida. Far more space was accorded to "*My Anguish, by Six Widows*," and to an indiarubber man who ties himself in knots.

The circulation of the *Daily Mirror* is satisfactory, I believe, to those who are concerned with its commercial welfare. I constantly see the Sovereign People reading it in trains and tubes. But its success is not so satisfactory to those good democrats who hope that with the spread of education the public will take an increasing interest in foreign affairs.

Nor is the *Daily Mirror* exceptional in its treatment of the Spanish War. Unless the Nationalists were in difficulties few newspapers (except *The Times*) gave any prominence to their doings. No newspapers in London published the fine series of photographs which appeared in *L'Illustration* of Paris, of February 4th, 1939, showing the cheering crowds in Barcelona greeting the veterans of Navarre, and General Solchaga, with his staff, hearing Mass in the Plaza de Cataluna.

We do not want to hear the truth about Spain. But we must hear it. Our very lives may depend upon our realizing that a proud and regenerated nation, ready to be friends with us, but contemptuous of threats, lies across our communications by the Atlantic and the Mediterranean.

And more than our lives. The true climate of Spain is one of lofty enthusiasm, self-sacrifice, and sanctity. These qualities made her great in the past, and all of us in Europe need reminding of them to-day.

Our English ignorance of what has been happening in Spain is depressing, but even more saddening is the constant appeal which one heard on all sides to purely

material considerations. "Our communications with India will be threatened, so we ought to have helped the Republicans." Or, "Spain has half the world's quicksilver, therefore we must be friends with Franco." What nonsense! Spain has something better than safety and more precious than mercury to give us. One of her sons, for instance, wrote a letter after he had been condemned to death by the Communists in Bilbao which gives a glimpse of the courage and confidence that lights the soul of Spain. It was smuggled out to his family by a sympathetic Basque warder. With it I end this chapter, for it reveals far better than I could, in a million words, the dayspring which we await in this jungle we have made by our materialism:

"SANTO HOSPITAL CIVIL DE BASARTO,
"BILBAO.

"December 18th, 1936.

"MY DEAREST CHILDREN,

"At this gravest hour of my life I am writing to give you the counsel of a father who is about to die, and would therefore have you follow his advice literally so that it may serve to guide you in your life. I have had three great loves in my life—the love of God, of Spain and of that dear Mother of yours who by His will is left to you so that you may take her as a constant example of affection, love and self-denial. I leave you whilst you are still children and unable to realize that you are losing a father, a counsellor and an educator; but Mamma, who is so good and kind, will take my place, and I will pray from Heaven for her and you.

"Study hard, make men of yourselves, the only way to which is by perseverance and work; and never forget that the main thing in life is the faith in God that saves souls, this being the end to which we came into the world. Be good Catholics, and the more fervent the better; and confess God privately and publicly as your greatest title to honour. The three of you boys must stand by your Mother always and in all things, whether she have reason on her side or not, for the supreme reason that she is your Mother.

“And now before God, into whose presence I shall be going soon, I proclaim that I have lived and die a Catholic, that I give my life gladly for God and Spain, and that you, my darling Candelas, have been my greatest love on earth. Long live Christ the King! Long live Spain! Good-bye, my darling wife, until eternity.”

CHAPTER XI

LA BELLE FRANCE

WHEN I think of a lunch I ate at the little Lion d'Or Hotel, at Selles, in Touraine, and the marvellous castle of Chenonceaux, and the rose-window of Chartres Cathedral, and the magnificence of Versailles, and the vineyards of Burgundy, and the great open fields of the Pas de Calais, my mind makes a reality out of this jumble. It is France to me, and I can add to it many pictures from many months when I was a French interpreter, and used to assess the damage (with M. Le Maire) caused by the manœuvres of our Indian Cavalry Division over the autumn crops of 1914.

But when I think of French politics I see a kaleidoscope of ridiculous quarrels, unsavoury scandals, and crises running through a fantastic series of Governments. The average life of a French Prime Minister is seven months. In seventy years there have been one hundred Governments in France.

To average Englishmen there is always something baffling about the mind of our neighbours. They are a peace-loving people, but men fight duels, women blind each other with vitriol when reft of their lovers, and children bite and scream at the slightest provocation. I stopped the other day at a shop in St. Raphael, to buy a toy for an English child. It was almost impossible to find anything that was not a model tank, an aeroplane, or a machine-gun. France wants peace, but on her own terms. She is entirely reasonable, except when it comes to the vital need of understanding foreigners. She feels that she is the true fountain of the Latin genius, and that the rest

of the world are barbarians, yet she mixes her blood cheerfully with that of black, brown and yellow races. Any Englishman who is honest with himself will admit that Paris is more civilized than London, just as London is more civilized than New York. (As a writer, there is no country whose good opinion I value more. When the French praise a book it is always worth reading, and not the mere fashion of the hour.) Yet in spite of high standards of intellectual integrity, French public life is a sink of iniquity. A cesspool would not be too strong a term. Frenchmen and Frenchwomen who are themselves the soul of honour, yet tolerate, if they do not actually encourage, an amazing system of "subventions" to the Press and immorality and corruption amongst office-holders. Again, the family life of the French masses is strict; yet Paris is full of perversity, and in high places the moral code is far laxer than that of this country. Even in Geneva, before the eyes of all the world, French politicians have flaunted their bejewelled mistresses while enunciating the highest principles of international morality. In short, the French are puzzling, dazzling, and rather dismaying people. . . . (Often we dismay them also.)

The very air of Paris is stimulating, let alone the speed of the traffic. (Someone might write an essay on the ferocious driving of Parisians, the shabby cabs of London, the ostentatious vehicles of Bucharest, and so on.) And Paris, of course, is not France. Throughout the country one feels the vitality of a great people, full of shrewdness and common sense, who know how to live. "How curious," said a peasant to me, on the Aisne, in 1914, watching my brother officers washing themselves in horse-buckets, "that you people make such a fuss about your skins, and so little about your stomachs." It was true. We were living like pigs, on bully-beef, while all the while a charming girl in the farm next door could have cooked us vege-

tables and soups fit for the palate of an Escoffier. And she did, when I took charge of the catering.

The French know how to live, but they are dying faster than they are being born, and they have made a terrible mess of their affairs since 1918, when Europe was at their feet. Not only their birthrate, but their industrial production has ebbed to a dangerous degree. They are intense individualists, ardent patriots, yet have allowed their country to slide into a decline from which nothing but a dictatorship can save them.

I lived once for a week with a French cavalry regiment. My first night at mess the war seemed a thousand miles away, though the guns boomed close to the chateau where we were billeted.

We toasted each other in champagne *nature*, that king of wines, grown from the soil we were defending, and the cook made a silk purse out of the sow's ear of rations; conversation sparkled as it never does at an English dinner-table, where everyone insists on trying to tell his neighbour something, instead of joining in a round game of talk. I was enchanted. But the ferocious quality of the French was apparent even in their gaiety; after a day or two I began to feel vaguely unhappy. I was amused, interested, sometimes elated, but never at my ease. Soon I realized that the regiment was not a happy family. Nobody liked the Colonel. That sometimes happens with us. But nobody liked *anybody* in this regiment. There was plenty of good talk and surface cordiality, but there was no respect, trust, love such as there is between officers and men in the British Army. The more I learned about Frenchmen the less I understood them. I respected them, and still do, but stories of their love affairs strangely disgusted me (strangely, for English bawdy-talk is broader) and their hates seemed to be mean and malicious. Yet the discipline of the regiment was good, and its courage

magnificent. I admired my hosts, but from a distance: and realized that there was some fundamental incomprehension between us. I still feel this gap, though I may claim to know the French fairly well, and have certainly received many kindnesses from them, not only of the social sort, but in the intimate comradeship of war.

Always, I think, there will be a reserve between the average Frenchman and the average Englishman, but the distance can and must be bridged by our common interests. Politics have nothing to do with personal affection. "Do you really love (*aimez*) the French?" a journalist asked Mussolini. "Sir," the Duce answered, "that is a verb I do not conjugate in diplomacy."

* * * * *

To-day one reads rather sadly the twenty-year-old inscription near the already old-fashioned wagon-lit, which is now an exhibit in the forest of Compiègne, where Foch met the Germans who came to sue for an armistice:

ICI

le 11 Novembre 1918

SUCCOMBRA

le criminel orgueil

de l'Empire Allemand

VAINCU

par les peuples libres

qu'il prétendait asservir.

Les peuples libres. . . . I suppose we are still that, although when I think of the generous idealism that inspired the years of the Great War, when we were anything but free, and compare those days with the present, I

wonder how long our liberties can endure. Assuredly in France there will be drastic changes. M. Daladier is a dictator; but is dictatorship enough, without a party behind him vowed to regenerate public life?

Most of us were under the impression, at any rate until the crisis of September, 1938, that democracy was working fairly well in France, and that M. Léon Blum, for instance, was a moderate-minded Liberal statesman engaged in giving his country some long-overdue industrial reforms. . . . Now we know better.

Of M. Blum the late M. Clemenceau said to his friend, M. Martet:

"At present I don't know which I want most: to keep alive and gaze at the sea, or to die, so as not to have to see Léon Blum any more!"

MARTET: "Better keep alive!"

CLEMENCEAU: "I do so from instinct. I wonder who on earth invented Léon Blum?"

MARTET: "The God of the Jews."

CLEMENCEAU: "He is a peculiar phenomenon. One thinks of the Isis and Mithra religions, which slowly penetrated into Roman society and destroyed it."

Have the people of France been dupes of dark forces, ever since the Revolution? The Jews? The "two hundred families"? The regents of the Bank of France? The Grand Orient?* Anti-Semitism is growing fast in

* The Grand Orient of France has no connection with the Grand Lodge of England or the Scottish Rite of Free and Accepted Masonry. English and Scottish Masonry rigidly exclude politics in their Lodges, which meet only for social and charitable purposes. In France, on the other hand, and in many other countries, the Grand Orient (with 30,000 members in France), the Grand Lodge of France (16,000 members) the *Droit Humain* (4,000 members) exercise a secret and powerful influence on industry, education and politics. There are 100 industrial lodges in France. One hundred Senators and 200 deputies are known to be Freemasons.

France, ever since M. Blum became Prime Minister, and freemasonry and high finance are also fiercely attacked.

When things go wrong it is tempting to find a scapegoat. Still, things do not go wrong by magic. Someone is responsible. The deeper we probe the more clearly we discover that the roots of Communism have spread throughout a soil weakened by war-exhaustion and racial impoverishment. France has too many foreigners on her rich soil. (She is spending at present £1,200,000 a month in looking after 450,000 Spanish refugees from Catalonia, of whom at least 25,000 are dangerous criminals. In addition, she has another 2,000,000 aliens.) She is a financial oligarchy, securely entrenched for the last hundred years; and the freemasons have a bad record of political scandals in which several Cabinet Ministers have been involved. And most of these people, to whom democracy is a profitable business, are an easy prey to the Comintern.

A few days before coming to power, on May 30th, 1936, M. Blum declared that "the question in the existing state of affairs is whether it is possible to prepare the mind of the people for the inevitable coming of Socialism. Is it possible to effect a peaceful transition from the old order to the new? . . . Why should anyone believe," he continued, "that we are going to look after bourgeois society, or serve its ends? Its ruin is already a reality, something accomplished: I tell you, it belongs already to the past."

When he spoke, fourteen of the largest factories of France were occupied by 42,270 workmen in stay-in strikes. Disorder spread rapidly as his Government took office on June 4th, 1936, and the sixty-nine industrial laws he passed in nine weeks, including the 40-hour week and the "democratization" of the Bank of France, did nothing practical to relieve the tension. Employers were bewildered, and the workers merely demanded more concessions.

Disorder in the cities, distress in the countryside, general dismay regarding finance: here we find once again the familiar "revolutionary situation," which the Communists hoped to turn to their advantage. "The Popular Front Government," said M. Maurice Thorez, the Communist leader, "is a Government to prepare for the complete seizure of power by the working-class, a Government which will be the prelude to the armed rising for the Dictatorship of the Proletariat."

Communists had long been busy in the army, navy, and air-force. Just how far the work of military disintegration had proceeded it is not permissible to publish, but the plight of French aviation at the time of the crisis of September, 1938, is well known. By 1936 every city, every large factory, and many villages had been thoroughly organized by the Comintern. "When one has an exact picture of this formidable organization," writes M. Jacques Bardoux* (to whom I am indebted for many details which follow) "with its vast bases in France and Spain, and its narrow apex in Russia, one is able to gauge its power of penetration." The Central Committee of the Parti Communiste Français is appointed by the Comintern in Moscow. Its chiefs are French (M. Maurice Thorez is a sturdy, good-looking, fair-haired ex-miner, gifted with a persuasive eloquence), but Russian agents are always in Paris to supervise the work of the P.C.F. and report directly to the Kremlin.

In the French Senate the P.C.F. has two Senators and in the Chamber 72 deputies. (There were only 17 Communists in the last Spanish Cortes.) In the municipalities of France Communists have a majority in 164 boroughs, and a strong minority in 200 others. There are 70 Communist Regional Centres, each with a paid secre-

* *Les Soviets contre la France and l'Accuse Moscow*, by Jacques Bardoux. Flammarion, Paris, 1938.

tary. Nine Special Committees of the P.C.F. deal with Trade Unions, Peasants, Women, Co-operatives, Colonies, the Middle Classes, Foreign Workers, Ex-Service men, and Tenants, thus leaving few classes of citizens untouched. By the alliance of the C.G.T.U. (Confédération Générale du Travail Unitaire, the Communist organization) with the C.G.T. (Confédération Général du Travail) the P.C.F. influences the 3,700,000 trade unionists of France.

Propaganda of the printed word is on an enormous scale, and direct subventions from Moscow have been proved in numerous cases. The circulation of *L'Humanité* is 510,000 a day. There are 39 regional organs, such as *L'Enchaîné* with a circulation of 23,000 and *Rouge Midi* with 14,000 subscribers. There are also numerous factory newspapers, such as *L'Incorruptible*, for the Renault works. Other publications supporting Communism printed in Paris are:

MONTHLIES:

L'Internationale Communiste.

La Russie d'aujourd'hui (illustrated).

Notre Jeunesse (illustrated).

La Lutte (the organ of the Militant Godless).

Le Réveil des Combattants.

Paix et Liberté (this organ, like other pacifist papers, preaches a crusade against Germany and Italy, following Dimitrov's directive: "The struggle for peace is in present circumstances a fight against Fascism").

Notre Jeunesse (illustrated, for children).

L'Enfance (illustrated, for children).

Les Cahiers du Contre-enseignement Prolétarien (for teachers).

Journal des Peuples Opprimés (organ of the Anti-Imperialist League).

Africa.

La Terre.

FORTNIGHTLIES :

Les Cahiers du Bolchevisme.

Le Chemin du Bonheur (for children).

Mon Camarade (for children).

Le Cri des Chômeurs.

Vigilance (for Anti-Fascist intellectuals).

WEEKLIES :

La Correspondance Internationale.

Les Documents de la Russie Neuve.

Sport.

Défense (organ of the International Red Help).

La Vie Ouvrière.

Publications issued from Moscow in French and circulated from Communist Headquarters for Western Europe in Paris include :

Le Journal de Moscow (a weekly).

La Revue de Moscow (an illustrated fortnightly review).

L'U.R.S.S. en Construction (an illustrated monthly).

La Littérature Internationale (a monthly).

There is evidence to show that a Communist rising was planned in France for June 11th, 1936, to coincide with a rising in Spain at the same time, but that the former was postponed in order not to weaken a valuable ally in a moment of international tension; indeed, it is doubtful whether the Comintern now desires a revolution in France, for a state of uncertainty and confusion serves its

purpose better. To-day France remains strong enough to attack Germany or Italy if a *casus belli* occurs, whereas a France in the throes of civil war would only be a liability.

Of the elections of 1936 the cautious M. Duval, of the *Temps*, writes*: "Money flowed: no one ever thought that the electoral chests of the Communists and Socialists could be so liberally provided. The posters, the pamphlets, the newspapers distributed by the gross, and the special orators sent from Paris all said the same thing: they told the people that the Popular Front meant bread, liberty, and peace. The forty-hour week would abolish unemployment, the franc would be defended, the peasants would be better off, and the Bank of France would be freed from the grip of the two hundred families!" (In the event none of these promises were fulfilled.)

On the eve of the elections M. Thorez made a broadcast appeal repudiating the "odious slanders" which represented his Party as the agent of the foreigner.† "It is not in Rome or Berlin, nor in any foreign capital, not even in Moscow (to which we have never disguised our deep attachment), that the destiny of our people will be decided; it is in Paris."

In Paris! So said M. Thorez, with his hand on his heart, well knowing that the constitution of the French Communist Party, like that of all other Communist Parties, provides that the decisions of Moscow are binding on all foreign centres. He concluded his broadcast by his famous appeal of the *main tendue*, asking Catholics and members of the Croix de Feu to become, with the Communists, "partisans of the purest and noblest ideal that could be proposed to men." The voting showed that

* *L'Expérience Française de Front Populaire*, by Maurice Duval. Institut Internationale d'action Antimarxiste, Paris, 1938.

† *Russia's Work in France*, by R. J. Dingle. Hale, 1938.

his words went home, for the Communist poll increased by 700,000 to a total of 1,502,404; and the strength of the Communist Party in France (that is, not sympathizers, but the trained and trusted agents of revolution) rose from 134,000 in May, 1936, to 322,000 members in May, 1937.

What were the results of M. Blum's reforms? He increased wages by 12 per cent., but prices rose by 30 per cent. Production slumped. Unemployment rose. Capital took fright, and once again the franc was in danger. "The country has no need to fear that there will be a monetary *coup d'état*," M. Blum told the Chamber on June 6th. Yet at that very moment he was preparing for the devaluation which, in fact, occurred in September, 1937.

The franc fell, but not M. Blum. He had proved himself useful to the forces of disorder, and now demanded a free hand to save the desperate situation. A dictatorship was necessary; temporary, of course, and not like those of Germany and Italy—still, a dictatorship. After a debate which lasted all night (a discussion on whether there should be a Government by discussion or not) the Chamber gave M. Blum the powers he asked for, but the Senate turned down the proposal flatly. The first Blum Government resigned, and was succeeded on June 22nd, 1937, by a Cabinet in which M. Chautemps was Premier, with M. Blum as his right hand. M. Bonnet, whom M. Blum had sent away as far as possible—to Washington as French Ambassador—owing to his inconvenient views on sound finance, was hastily brought back to save the franc from collapse. France had need of him, for there was at this time only £180,000 in the Treasury Account of the Bank of France. Gold reserves had diminished by £50,000,000, and the Public Debt had increased by £115,000,000.

The economic position of France is precarious (although

her natural wealth is enormous) because her politicians have been playing ducks and drakes with her money. In 1938 there were only two Ministers of Finance, but in a recent year there were no less than six. As the Hon. George Peel says*: "They are not exactly transient, embarrassed phantoms; they are transient, but not embarrassed. I remember one of them was in office in December, 1925, for eighteen days, but during that time he brought in eight important measures of finance. . . . There is an incredible confusion and chaos in the fiscal and economic legislation of France."

Gold hoarding and tax evasion are practised on a gigantic scale. Mr. Peel quotes an estimate made by experts of the Bank of France, who calculated that six milliards of gold are hoarded in the country (say, £33,000,000) and twenty-four milliards outside (say, £132,000,000), and that there are also thirty milliards of hoarded notes (say, £114,000,000). A total of nearly £280,000,000 is hidden away by those who fear a collapse of credit.

As regards tax evasion, probably three-quarters of income-tax remains unpaid (France has only had an income-tax since 1914), and few people in France buy or sell real estate without drawing up a fictitious agreement, in order to avoid paying more than a moiety of the property-transfer tax. Yesterday, to put it bluntly, France was on the verge of bankruptcy. To-day, under a dictatorship, her position remains difficult, but is rather more secure.

The franc, which had stood at 76 to the pound at the beginning of M. Blum's first administration, fell to 166 to the pound, and is now 176 to the pound. When M. Blum left his second Premiership, one hundred factories

* *Journal of the Institute for International Affairs* for March, 1928.

were still occupied by their employees, and there were 190,000 steel workers on strike. The French Budget was only able to cover one-half of the expenses of the State.

Such was the position—the appalling position—when M. Daladier came to power on April 10th, 1938, with M. Chautemps as his Vice-Premier and M. Bonnet as his Finance Minister. The outstanding features of his régime have been his handling of the crisis of September, 1938, the breaking of the General Strike in November, and his assumption of dictatorial powers for six months as from March, 1939.

Under M. Daladier there has been an encouraging but not as yet remarkable return of confidence. Production is rising slowly. Leeway in defence is being made up steadily. Expatriated capital is returning shyly. One cannot say more at present. However sound the French people are at heart, they have a terrific task to face in rebuilding their economy with a declining population, possible enemies on three fronts, and an ally who hesitates to introduce conscription. MM. Daladier and Bonnet are the foes of all the forces of disorder in France, as Mr. Chamberlain is in England; but these men have implacable enemies to face, “bears” who have sold pounds and francs short on Wall Street and know that they will be ruined if peace is maintained.

* * * * *

Right-wing friends used to tell me that France was bound to see a revolution in 1939, accompanied by bloodshed. This danger may be averted now, for there is a distinct swing away from Communism, which the small landholder and small shopkeeper have recognized as the negation of Christian values and individual enterprise; but M. Daladier is as yet by no means out of the wood.

And one must believe in miracles where France is con-

cerned. On a hundred battlefields we have tested the courage of the French and their amazing tenacity; in their glorious history "*ils ne passeront pas*" was not said for the first or the last time at Verdun. The Voices heard by Jeanne d'Arc still speak to the hidden heart of France.

A friend of mine, criticizing the armies in Flanders, said of the Germans: "These Huns are brave enough, but if someone with a commanding voice were to say to them, 'Halt! About turn! Ground arms!' they would at once obey, and the war would be over. I wonder someone doesn't try it!" Eventually someone did, and our propaganda worked like magic. Of the French my friend said: "The little devils go back to get a cup of coffee, and leave us in the lurch. We've had several disasters because they exposed our flanks. But they always come up again, and fight like tiger-cats, and kill more Germans than if they'd stayed put!"

The Frenchman is a superb soldier, especially in a modern army, where a high degree of individual initiative is required. Never again, thank God, will massed attacks on the Somme model be possible in future wars. After artillery preparation the tanks will go forward, screening small detachments of machine-gunners who will endeavour to enfilade the enemy's position. Once the attack is launched, communication with headquarters will be almost impossible. The tactics of the breakthrough require soldiers with a lively intelligence and junior leaders who can take responsibility, qualities in which the French excel.

These innate virtues will serve France in other spheres. Her patriots left the trenches of civilization from 1932 to 1939, and we have seen the result in a distracted Europe. Scandal has followed scandal and riot after riot in France.

A few of the Communist disorders may be mentioned,

to show how similar are the results of a Popular Front wherever it is in power:

At Bullier, in September, 1932, 26 police were wounded. In Paris, on February 6th, 1934, there were 24 dead and 1,000 wounded in the Place de la Concorde, and on February 9th, 4 dead and 200 wounded in the Place de la République; on August 6th, 1935, at Brest, 1 dead and 15 wounded; on March 16th, 1937, at Clichy, 5 dead; on September 2nd, in Morocco, 10 dead and 56 wounded, and next month 50 wounded, and similar disturbances in Tunisia. Of social conflicts France has had her fill, from the General Strike of February 12th, 1934, to that of November 30th, 1938, and all were inspired and led by Communists.

During an important debate in the Chamber last year Communist deputies telephoned to Moscow to ask how they should vote. Later, owing to a change in the situation, they telephoned again, but received contradictory instructions, for the Commissar who had given them their first orders had been liquidated in the meanwhile. . . . Thus were the affairs of a proud people swayed!

Not for long, however! M. Daladier has drawn the claws of the Communists; and in the 1940 elections I have little doubt that the masses will turn to the Right, if not to a dictatorship. Colonel de la Rocque is gaining ground again; he had half a million supporters in 1936 when the Croix de Feu was dissolved, now he has 750,000. (But few people imagine that Colonel de la Rocque himself could govern France.) The Jeunesses Patriotes are also very much alive, with a quarter of a million followers. The Royalist Party is in eclipse; it has no following in the country. M. Flandin is unlikely to return as long as the present tension with the Axis Powers continues, or increases, as seems likely owing to the emphatic French "*jamais*" to Italy's proposals. Amongst Left-wing organizations there is considerable confusion. M. Blum's party is split. The Confédération Général du Travail has lost

a million members since the General Strike of November, 1938.

But it is the peasants of France, not the political parties, who are still the real masters of her destiny. The parties in the Chamber group and regroup themselves according to the intrigues of the moment, and are loyally served by the Civil Service, but behind the Government are the vines and the corn and the men and women to whom they belong. French courage and French common sense remain. In 1914, when I first came to know the peasants, they were the backbone of the country, for half France was based on her soil. To-day little more than a third of her people are engaged in agriculture; still, they are the salt of her earth.

They are the leaven that shall rise in the dough of mean materialism and sententious nonsense which we falsely call democracy. The French may discover a true democracy, a new way of life, for themselves and perhaps for others also.

My mind returns to the Lion d'Or at Selles, where Jeanne d'Arc stayed in November, 1429. My wife and I lunched there on a November day. Our hostess was suckling a child, the youngest of five. We arrived late and tired. She apologized for giving us only what she and her husband had eaten themselves.

Only! What a jugged hare, what a cream cheesc, and salad, and generous amber wine! That inn is the real France. People who live as our hosts do of the Lion d'Or, with so great a history behind them and so grand a country before them, must, humanly speaking, be immortal. Through them, and their children and children's children, something very precious survives: the grace and glory that is France. And there are still millions of them, sane and solid people, with a sense of tradition and a sense of proportion that may save the world.

CHAPTER XII

JOHN BULL AND THE FOREIGNERS

Yours now are the ancient hills and the wide horizon,
O youth immortal, yours the undying fire;
The faith that life has an aim; that a spark from heaven
Still falls on earth to kindle your own desire;
That the long blind struggle of man from the primal darkness
Up to his glimpse of a God, was not wholly vain;
Hold fast that faith; for a world that had wellnigh lost it,
Here, now, in the dark, cries: "Give us that glimpse again!"

Alfred Noyes, 1937.

OLD Sa'adi tells us of three wandering dervishes visiting an elephant in a dark stable. One felt the beast's hide and thought it was a wall; another, touching its tail, said it was a rope; and the third, who stroked its trunk, declared that it was a snake. These men have pointed many an obvious moral. I bring them forward again because a legion of wandering dervishes have been writing books on Europe, and now I have added to their number.

I believe I know a snake when it crosses my path, and I have tried to show you the serpent in the European jungle. You may think me prejudiced. But was not the viewpoint of the other dervishes also rather limited? I feel that we are all groping in the twilight—perhaps the twilight of dawn—judging others by standards which are really only applicable to ourselves, and therefore often judging falsely. As Dr. C. G. Darwin pointed out in the Galton Lecture this year, the Theory of Complementarity applies to foreign affairs: we can only measure things by assuming that other things are fixed, and these other things are often like Alice's croquet mallet, turning into

a flamingo in her hand. Knowledge is relative, and the mind of a man a fallible pair of callipers: as soon as it grasps something completely it has ceased to be itself. To measure the mind of a Frenchman we must know France well, but knowing France well we cease to be typically English. And so on.

On a short view it is quite true that Germany and Italy are making claims on us more dangerous than any ideological threat from Moscow. But on a long view there are no terms to be made with the Comintern and what it stands for—namely, the annihilation of Christianity and of our whole system of civilization.

In the confusion of the days to come, while rival systems are fighting for the dominion of the world, we must base our outlook on broad principles. Assuredly all Communists are not criminals, and the Comintern is not the only villain in the European drama; capitalist greed, Nazi grabbing, and Fascist threats have also played their part. I am no supporter of any system that cannot find work for two millions of my countrymen, and I look with disgust on some of the recent actions of the Axis. But Marx and Lenin meant what they said about governing by terror, exterminating religion, and intervening in the affairs of foreign countries, even by invasion when suitable opportunity offers; and their successors have carried out their policy in all its ugly details. More, their policy has been approved by 91,000,000 Russians. Let them do what they like in their own country, but why should they export their creed of murder?

Of late we have been told that not only is Communism a failure, but all authoritarian government, and that there is nothing to choose between the dictatorships: one is as bad as the other. Now, Communism is no more comparable to Nazism or Fascism than three motor-cars are comparable because they all have wheels. There are

obvious similarities between the dictatorships, as there are between cars—for instance, they are all three revolutionary governments—but the criterion of cars is their performance, and this standard of comparison should also be applied to the dictatorships. Every nation has made mistakes and caused the death of innocent people (including our own), but to compare the worst actions of any European Government with the bestialities of the Bolshevik is absurd.*

Where is our sense of proportion? What is wrong with England, I ask myself, that we can stomach the stuff we are being told about the state of Europe? How is it that our sense of values has been so distorted?

If you tell the man-in-the-street that thousands of our boys and girls are being taught Communism as a religion, he will laugh in your face. He knows that Germany and Italy are always up to mischief, but there is no Communism in England; it has been rejected by the sturdy common sense of the masses, so let's turn to the sport

* Statistics from the U.S.S.R. are unreliable, but according to figures given by Soviet officials themselves 1,860,000 persons were executed between 1917 and 1920: this would be the equivalent of more than 500,000 persons executed in England during the same time. According to the Soviet statistician Oganowsky, 5,000,000 people died of famine between 1921 and 1922. About the same number died in the famine of 1933. The religious, military and political purges have already been mentioned. Hardly any churches are open, and the number of clergy and monks arrested is conservatively estimated at 50,000. Many have been murdered, including 31 Bishops. Half the naval and military and air force staffs have been shot, and three-quarters of the chief Commissars throughout the U.S.S.R. Political prisoners employed on forced labour in Siberia are said to number 500,000. To obtain a visa to enter Russia is a matter of great difficulty, whereas visitors are welcomed in Germany and Italy. An apology ought to be necessary for the recapitulation of such information, but in England we are anaesthetised by anti-Fascist propaganda, and forgetful—as no other European country is—of what has been done in Russia.

pages or to the gossip column! Besides, if we are to have a war, we must have Russia on our side.

But shall we have Russia? What inducements can we offer to gain her goodwill? There is only one—that we accept Communism. . . . We might also ask ourselves whether Russia is fit to fight any battles, with her leading generals and admirals shot and 35,000 political Commissars enjoying equal power with the present naval and military chiefs. The system did not work well in Republican Spain.

There are plenty of people here in England who hope to see us plunged into the "Second Imperialist War," as they call the present state of tension. Before listening to them we would do well to enquire into their credentials. The British Labour Party is a well-informed and patriotic body, with no delusions about what is going on at home,* and it can tell us much of the Communists and near-Communists in our midst.

For instance, the Workers' International Relief is not a charitable organization, as some Socialist sympathizers used to think, but an instrument of Communist war upon the Labour Movement. "It can take steps which political parties cannot take," said Comrade Willi Muenzenberg (who is now in disgrace with the Comintern, perhaps because of his indiscretions). "We must get hold of other groups, under other names. We must penetrate every conceivable *milieu*, get hold of artists and professors, make use of theatres and cinemas, and spread abroad the doctrine that Russia is prepared to sacrifice everything to keep the world at peace."

Amongst the associations which are regarded as at least sympathetic to the Communist cause in Great Britain (Comrade Muenzenberg calls them "Innocents' Clubs"),

* *The Communist Solar Sytem*, from Transport House, S.W. 1, 1933.

whether or not they are actually connected with the Communist Party, are:

The Young Communist League.
 The Aircraft Shop Stewards' National Council.
 Friends of the Soviet Union.
 The Left Book Club.
 Icos.
 National Unemployed Workers' Movement.
 Film and Photo League.
 Kino.
 Collet's Bookshops.
 Workers' Bookshops.
 Negro Welfare Association.
 Spanish Dependants Aid Committee.
 China Campaign Committee.
 Unity Theatre.
 Prospect Tours.
 Relief Committee for Victims of Fascism.
 League Against Imperialism.
 Marx House (for training Communists).

Penetration of the Labour Movement is particularly directed towards youth. In 1935 the leaders of the Young Communist League returned from Moscow and prepared a "Charter of Youth Rights," which appealed to anti-Fascist and anti-war feeling; they were careful not to put forward the usual Communist slogans demanding revolution and class war, and replaced them with "Mobilize for Peace!" and "£5,000,000 for Playing Fields!"

There are 16,000 Communists in Great Britain, an increase of 3,000 in the last year, and 4,500 Young Communists. The circulation of the *Daily Worker* is about 80,000 a day. *Challenge* has 20,000 weekly readers.

Another Communist publication is the weekly *World News and Views*, formerly the *International Press Correspondence*; and the following monthly journals are at least sympathetic to Communism:

Labour Monthly.
Labour Research.
Discussion.
Our Youth.
Russia To-day.
Left News.
Conveyor.
New Propeller.
Irish Front.
New Builders' Leader.
Finsbury Clarion.
Holborn Outlook.
Party Organizer.
The Printer.
Teachers' International Review.
The Country Standard.

Until 1938 there were Communist cells in all our arsenals, dockyards, and aircraft factories,* engaged in slowing down or sabotaging production. Nowadays Moscow wants a well-armed Britain, but the cells are still in existence. Details cannot be published, but the unpleasant fact remains that there are people in our key industries who cannot be trusted, and who would consult the interests of the Comintern before the interests of their country. ("Spy mania!" and "Mare's nest!" I can hear the very people declare who were lately telling us to disarm!) We can hardly believe that conspiracies exist

* *Hindering National Defence*, published by the Economic League, 1937.

in England, for some of us are so comfortable, contented, law-abiding. . . . We have grown sluggish in imagination, as sometimes happens to the English when they take their ease. One day the fear of God may sain us.

In his lusty youth the British lion had to range far for his food and fight for his life. Those days are over. To-day he is lapped in the luxury of a vast and half-developed Empire, inclined to sprawl and yawn, rather dazed, and very cross, growling at the Nazi eagle and the Fascist wolf and the Rising Sun. . . . He must wake up and range across his own domain instead of complaining eternally about the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo triangle. If it did not exist, some other combination would be casting envious eyes on his possessions. Healthy lions do not believe in perpetual peace. "Come the three corners of the world in arms, and we shall shock them!"

Sooner or later we shall be challenged; in the world as it is we cannot expect to hold our immense possessions for ever without attack. We have tried to change the world so that it would agree to maintain the *status quo*, but that was not in our power. Security is in our power, provided we no longer delude ourselves with the idea that any formula but that of our own strength can save us in the day of reckoning.

We have seen how difficult and dangerous it will be to engage ourselves to support any Continental Power, but how necessary some engagements are at the moment. How are we to implement them? There is only one way, and that we are not taking it, at any rate immediately, argues badly for our state of mind. In the old days we used to look facts in the face. Now we seem to shun them.

Why do we fear conscription? What more democratic

measure could be conceived, if we mean by democracy an effort to "tie in a living tether the prince and priest and thrall"? If we had conscription, not only Germany and Italy, but also our potential allies would know for certain that we were not (as they suspect) intending to let others do the fighting whilst we manufacture munitions of war. . . . I cannot here develop all the advantages of the measure I have in mind, which is doubtless too revolutionary to be put into practice at this anxious moment. (Indeed, conscription will bring us no immediate increase in man-power.) Nevertheless, I would suggest, in bald outline, that national service should be universal, for both sexes, and for all ages between 16 and 60. I believe such a measure would receive the necessary support in this free country, but doubtless, for some time to come, only a limited number of men would actually be required for military purposes, but every citizen should be classified for service, and should be under legal compulsion to serve, when required, although he or she might not actually be called upon for training.

Present indications are that the youth of England, between the ages of 20 and 25, would be the first to go to the front. This has been so in past wars, but I do not see why we should not make a drastic innovation, to save not so much the generous idealism of youth, although this also is important in the nation's life, but our eugenic future, the lives of children that might be born to us, but will not be if we sacrifice the rising generation to make the world safe for their elders. I would keep the young chiefly at home, and send their elders to fight. Many men like myself, between the ages of 40 and 60, are sound enough to occupy a trench or to fire a machine-gun. Many of us have had experience of war, and are either retired or could with advantage retire from our occupations. We shall die soon in the course of nature: why

not send us first? At any rate, those of us who are not wage-earners. And, whoever is chosen, let there be no distinctions of rank or money. Even physical infirmity, unless very serious, need be no bar to working for one's country. Almost everyone has an active if perhaps a humble place in the national life. In this way, gradually, if not at one stroke, we could regenerate the spirit of England, to-day sickening with inaction.

In most parts of the country the response to the Voluntary National Register has been magnificent; but not everywhere. The poison of pacifism has gone deep in parts of the North and East. In the South, and in all country districts, National Service speakers meet with cheers, but there are certain industrial centres where any allusion to fighting for one's country is greeted with boos, and cries of "Militarist!" and "Don't talk tripe!" To soldiers it is obvious that striking power is more important than shelter, but not to civilians. Millions of people on these islands have never been confronted with the realities of war, and nourish absurd ideas about what is required of the citizens of a great Empire. Let us hope that they can be educated in time.

However, we have always been casual, since the days of Ethelred. Before the Great War, Harry Graham wrote:

"I was playing golf
The day the Germans landed:
All our men had gone astray,
All our ships were stranded:
And the thought of England's shame
Almost put me off my game."

That was our attitude then, and still is. It makes us irritating allies, but also—and it is a consoling thought—dangerous adversaries. We have reserves to draw upon when our backs are to the wall.

These reserves appear often in surprising ways. Lately

I sat next to two old ladies in a Chelsea tea-shop, apparently mild, gentle, decrepit creatures, whose thoughts would be of their garden, or of the vicar's sermon, if not of the next world. I could not help overhearing one of them saying to the other: "Whaling is the best sport in the world!" Here is the poetry of Empire! All English people have a vein of adventure lying deep in their make-up, and a habit of looking on the world as their playground.

Also we have faith, courage, and kindness, no mean qualities for the difficult days ahead.

In an emergency we can believe anything that is necessary. In Lucknow, not a hundred years ago, a thousand half-starved men, racked by sickness and short of ammunition, never doubted that they would hold their own against one hundred thousand; and they did. (But to-day with our agriculture in its present state we should be wholly starved if we lost command of the air, or the sea-routes by which our supplies arrive. We have strong knees, but they will not avail without food and fuel. As Madrid fell so might London.)

Courage is an awkward thing to discuss, for comparisons are odious, but so much has been said in recent years by the pacifists about the brutal qualities of "militarists" that it is only right to record that in my experience the braver the soldier the kinder he is. For three brief weeks in 1914 in France I commanded English troopers. They grumbled in billets, but as soon as we marched north and came in contact with the enemy they became transformed—literally—into perfect gentle knights. The more tiring the day the politer they were to their hosts of an evening. The more hard work they had to do—night-duty after sixteen hours in saddle, reveillé before dawn, caring for sick horses when they were sick themselves—the less trouble they gave. How long this saintship would

have lasted I do not know, but they were heroes, every one. We have, I think, greater endurance than any other people. Germans crack quite soon under adversity. We do not: we wake up when things go wrong.

There is a legend about Babar, the Great Moghul, that when he was a boy hunting in the forests of the Hindu Kush, he was about to draw his bow on a deer when the beast looked at him with such tender eyes that he allowed her to escape. Turning in the thicket, she said: "As Allah has made you merciful, so He will make you mighty."

Allah has made us merciful, and given us a great Empire. In the village where my mother lives she saw the butcher's boy nursing his pony through a thunderstorm. The pony was too frightened to move, because of the lightning, so he took off his coat, and put it over its head: he stood there in the pouring rain for half an hour patting its neck. There you see, in a flash, why our inheritance is preserved!

What a mighty inheritance it is! What prosperity and contentment might be ours! Instead of keeping two million unemployed on these islands, rotting on the dole, we might be busy clearing forests, irrigating prairies, erecting factories, developing the rich gifts accorded to us by "time and the ocean and some fostering star." But to do these things we must believe in ourselves, and free ourselves from the dead hand of fallacious doctrines.

Our population has doubled in the last hundred years. So has our wealth. Our electorate, during the same period, has increased from 1,000,000 to nearly 29,000,000; yet we are worse governed and less capable than we used to be.

Are we losing some of our native shrewdness, becoming

less like John Bull, more like the John Smiths and Mary Browns of the Peace Ballot? Think of old John Jorrocks, how he would have spat with rage at Lord Cecil's questionnaire!

Some frightening facts have been discovered by research workers in eugenics, which indicate that our people are definitely declining in mental ability. These facts should be faced, and freely discussed, especially by those who do *not* believe that England is going to the dogs.

We have saved ourselves from great perils before, and can do so again. But a miracle will be necessary, a miraculous enlightenment, before we shall understand that the invasion of England from the weaker strains in our own blood is almost as dangerous as anything which threatens us from the outside. We all know about the German Menace, and rather less about the Red Horse of Troy: but few of us have even heard about the Differential Birthrate.

In his essay *On Liberty*, John Stuart Mill wrote:

"The initiation of all wise and noble things, comes, and must come, from the individual, generally at first from some one individual. It would seem that when the opinions of masses of nearly average men are everywhere become, or becoming the dominant power, the counterpoise and corrective to that tendency would be the more and more pronounced individuality of those who stand on the higher eminences of thought.

"Eccentricity has always abounded when and where strength of character has abounded; and the amount of eccentricity in a society has generally been in proportion to the amount of genius, mental vigour and moral courage it contained. That so few now appear to be eccentric marks the chief danger of the time.

"The greatness of England is now all collective: individually small, we only appear capable of anything great by our habit of combining. But it was men of another standing that made England what it has been; and men of another standing will be needed to prevent its decline."

These "men of another standing" are no longer appearing in sufficient numbers. We used to lead the world in invention, research, manufacture, as well as sport. Now quite obviously we do not.

The birthrate of our "professional" classes is 98 per 1,000, that of skilled workers 134 per 1,000, and that of the unskilled 178 per 1,000. Roughly speaking, the less intelligent part of our population produces twice as many children as the more intelligent. This has been going on for about eighty years, since the Industrial Revolution, with the result that we are slowly becoming a nation of incapables. And not so very slowly, either, for if present trends continue in 300 years half our population will be mentally deficient.

Our ancestors, living in days of larger opportunity, did not limit their families. To-day, too many of us do so, and sin thereby against patriotism, if not against religion. A nation may die from lack of capable children as surely, if not as quickly, as it may die from lack of food.

In a monograph in the *Eugenics Review*, Dr. Raymond B. Cattell has described the tests he has made amongst thousands of children throughout the country, proving that the Intelligence Quotient* of the average child is

* The Intelligence Quotient ("I.Q.") is a way of measuring mental ability. It is obtained by setting a child a series of questions designed to test his capacity to grasp and correlate ideas. The tests consist of asking the subject to complete a picture, to detect analogies, to classify groups of things presented to him, etc.: some of the tests are simple enough to be solved by a child of six, but they can be graded up to any degree of difficulty. Professor Spearman's *Abilities of Man* is the classical work on the subject, and Dr. Cattell describes some of the latest tests in *Your Mind and Mine*. The subject thus tested is awarded a certain number of marks, which fixes his "mental age"—i.e., the score made by an average child in answering that set of questions—and the I.Q. is obtained by dividing the mental age of the subject by its actual age, and multiplying the quotient by 100, in

declining by about one point in every ten years. This tendency is not a matter of conjecture, but of mathematical certainty, for it has been proved beyond all shadow of doubt that the children of feeble-minded parents are generally feeble-minded, and the offspring of clever parents generally clever. And in the last thirty years Dr. Cattell tells us: "The very able children, with an I.Q. of 140, are practically halved, while 'scholarship children,' with an I.Q. of 120, are reduced by about 35 per cent."

We have lost, during a generation (and not only through the Great War, which was also disgenic, but through the Differential Birthrate) half the men and women who should have been our leaders. They remain unborn. The foolish and the feckless fill their vacant places. If this goes on, how long shall we be able to maintain our position in the world? Our land cannot be cultivated by men without ability, nor can our factories and offices be staffed by half-wits.

order to avoid fractions. Say your child, aged nine, has scored 80 marks in the tests, and that this is the score for an average child of twelve: he is said to have a mental age of twelve, and his I.Q. is $\frac{12 \times 100}{9} = 133$. Say he scored 50, and that this is the score for an average child of seven, then his I.Q. would be $\frac{7 \times 100}{9} = 77$.

Mentally defective children have generally an I.Q. below 65. "Scholarship children"—*i.e.*, those for whom a higher education is obviously worth while—have generally an I.Q. above 120; whilst strikingly brilliant children may have I.Q.s of 150 to 170. Amongst many thousands of persons tested, Dr. Cattell has met only two subjects with I.Q.s of 200. A proof of the validity of I.Q. is that subjects tested by different examiners, at different times, give the same results to within a few points. Although some doctors have questioned the usefulness of these tests (chiefly their usefulness in dealing with mental defectives) all psychologists are agreed that they do give valuable data for the purpose of comparing "mother-wit" and "teachability" in children.

Because babies vary in intelligence, however, society need not be graded into masters and slaves. In the making of a good life, intelligence is not as important as other qualities, hard to define, but commonly called character. In the Christian (as also in the Islamic and Jewish) faith men are equal in the sight of God; but this is not the democratic claim at all, which is based on the theory of *congenital* equality. That men are born "equal in reason" is a theory exploded fifty years ago, and with it the philosophical basis of Socialism and Communism. We come into the world each with his individual talent, and there is much wisdom in our English Catechism which recommends the Christian child to prepare himself to do his duty "in that state of life in which it shall please God to call him." There need be no inertia in this attitude. If God has given us ambition and ability, we are to use them, but we cannot all be great and powerful. It is a plain fact (to which politicians rarely allude) that the task of every Government is to exert authority, that we may do what we ought, and refrain from doing what we ought not; and that we cannot all be rulers, under any system of government, existing or imagined. Democracy tells us that we are the Sovereign People, but what is this illusion worth to our two million unemployed who have no economic freedom? Are the peoples of the totalitarian countries, now ruled by the sons of a cobbler, a customs official, and a blacksmith, much worse off than we are? They at least have work and wages and until recently could look confidently to the future. Their dreams may be shattered, but if so it will be by military adventures, not by their internal economy, from which we have even something to learn.

After Communism and Pacifism I would put Internationalism as the most dangerous idea current in

Great Britain. They all hang together. We have no need to be Internationalists with the British Empire to develop.

Theoretically it might be possible for the Great Powers to be commercially interdependent, but not practically. Practically speaking, the affairs of the world will never improve until each Great Power puts its own house in order.

If we try to make a world as the financiers want it, in which everyone is dependent on everyone else, irrespective of race, creed, ways of life, the result will be confusion or a tyranny clamping down the safety-valves of discontent, for the masses can be articulate only within the Nation-State. It is difficult enough to keep the delicate balance between consumption and production in areas where people speak one language or are bound together by a common loyalty; but the idea of central management for world trade is absurd, or at least apocalyptic. Nobody would gain by such an arrangement except exchange brokers, middlemen, and shippers; and these, in fact, are the people who hold up Internationalism as a lofty ideal.

What loftier ideal can be imagined than contented nations, or groups of contented nations, based on their own inner forces? In such a world there would be little or nothing left to fight about, whereas in a world where everyone is trying to cut down his competitor there can be nothing but quarrels. Imperial self-sufficiency is an ideal which can be approached in measurable time, whereas international free trade must become an international free fight for markets, and so remain until human nature changes in a most radical fashion.

One day, in the not impossible future, the world may be divided into four or five great economic groups, and if

these groups are strong and well balanced they may agree to live and let live. But if we attempt to mind the foreigners' business before our own, try to manage the whole world, or even Europe, as a single unit, we shall see no halcyon on the horizon, but the eagles of war.

The dictatorship countries are right and the democracies are wrong in their respective economic theories. For the sake of human happiness we must, within reason (of course, there will be many exceptions) limit the area of economic struggle rather than seek to extend it over continents. For England this would be a hard doctrine if we did not have our Empire. But we do have it, and without it we could not live.

The Empire (I may be forgiven for repeating this curiously neglected platitude) is for England a matter of life and death. We are one of the most congested areas in the world, with 750 persons to the square mile, whereas Canada has only three persons to the square mile and Australia two. We cannot feed ourselves without the Dominions and Crown Colonies—not, at any rate, as a free people. With them we can produce practically everything we require.

We have five of the great ports in the world: London, Liverpool, Calcutta, Hong-Kong, Montreal. "We control half the world's supply of cattle, of coal, of jute, of palm-oil, of rice, rubber-seeds, and tin."* The oil of Mosul and the gold of South Africa are in our keeping. The manufacturing power and mineral resources of the Empire are amongst the greatest in the world. Let us seize our opportunities and have done with that extraordinary and all-too-common English attitude of mind which considers that the rights of animals come first, the

* Lord Beaverbrook in the House of Lords, November 19th, 1929. See also his *My Case for Empire Free Trade*, 1930.

rights of foreigners second, and those of our own people last. While we were in a ferment of fury over the woes of the Abyssinians, and while we were subscribing £450,000 for the Jews in Germany, there were 7,000,000 people living on these islands in conditions euphemistically described as "below the margin of subsistence"—that is, in misery and want; while in the United States (in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia) some 5,000,000 farmers and their dependants were also absolutely destitute. The misdirection of moral indignation is a weakness of the Anglo-Saxon mind.

There is enough wrong in England to arouse our indignation and occupy our energies for a generation. We must undo the results of a century of wrong living.

"Signs of morbidity are almost universal,"* Lord Lyvington writes, "so much so that we are apt to look upon the average as normal. People think it is quite normal to have 'flu every winter, to have incessant colds, to have false teeth and to wear spectacles. . . . Constipation, headaches, catarrh, low spirits, gastric ulcers and an infinite number of minor ailments are looked upon as the everyday lot of man. . . . This is borne out by the School Medical Officers' Reports, wherein really bad teeth are the lot of over two-thirds of the school children examined. It would easily be proved that 90 per cent. of the children suffer from some defect or other that is a more or less serious handicap. These may vary from rickets and spinal curvature to dental caries, chronic catarrh and flat feet. One and all are signs of wrong nutrition or disgenic parenthood."

How can we expect to have sound bodies when the majority of us live on tinned foods, drinking faintly chlorinated water, and breathing air contaminated with carbon-monoxide? A million acres of arable land have

* *Famine in England*, by Lord Lyvington. The Right Book Club, 10, Soho Square, W. 1, 1938.

gone out of cultivation. British agriculture is almost bankrupt. "The landlords have gone into the City, and the people into the slums." Yet our land and our climate are superb, and our livestock sets the standard of excellence for the whole world. So ought our men and women to be the paragons of human progress. They once were. Now we are a "C 3 nation."

It would be foolish not to admit, with Bagehot, that we are leading "such a life as God never suffered men to lead on the earth long, which He has always crushed out by calamity or revolution." *Must* we be taught by disaster? Or will these times, which are a very mirror of desolation, compel us to return to the strength and sanity of our native earth?

Thirty years ago the Germans found* that 75 per cent. of the parents of men fit for military service came from the country, 23 per cent. from small towns, and only 2 per cent. from the forty-eight cities of Germany with over 100,000 population. The same is doubtless true of us. Without our agriculture, now on the road to ruin, we shall not only starve in wartime, but become sterile of our fighting stock. Yet in 1938 we imported £250,000,000 worth of foodstuffs—grain, meat, dairy produce—most of which might have come from our English earth.

The outlook, then, is gloomy, as it so often is before the dawn. Too many seem to want to behave like rabbits, burrowing underground. We have 1,904,000 men between the ages of twenty and twenty-five in the United Kingdom, yet our modest little army of 200,000 is still 20,000 men under strength. Our boys and girls are growing up in idleness because, instead of encouraging them to go out to the wide lands of Empire, we prefer to let them stay idle on money we draw from our foreign invest-

* *Imperial Germany*, by Prince von Bülow. Cassell, 1914.

ments.* Small blame to them if they become Communists, if capitalism can do nothing better for them than the dole! Can we "muddle through" another crisis?

Can we? The courage of our people, their resourcefulness, their strength in adversity, could not become a factor in war unless our virtues had time to take effect. Will they have time? "If clocks were tongues of bawds," as Prince Harry said to Falstaff.

War is not only inevitable, it is imminent unless we train ourselves, as well as arm ourselves, so thoroughly that aggressors are deterred. The whole population must be ready in case of war. If we do so prepare ourselves, then we may delay the conflict beyond living sight and hand over our heritage in a better condition to the next generation. Beyond that we cannot look. Aftermen will have other problems, but for us the way is clear.

We must be prepared, morally as well as physically. Prepared to resist Germany and Italy if their claims are extravagant, but prepared also, out of our strength, and in friendship with France, to make concessions which should have been made long ago in favour of the Axis Powers. We must not be involved in a war to make the world safe for Stalin or international Jewry. Those of us who wish to uphold the French and British Empires have nothing in common with those who wish to destroy Germany and Italy. We do not want to destroy these Empires, unless their demands are impossible to accept. So far the only impossible demand has been made by the Communists, who desire to dominate the world with their system.

* We could have established at least 10,000 of them in British Columbia for the £10,000,000 which we voted to the Czechs without discussion.

We are rich, but our great possessions might vanish in a night. We have a higher standard of wages, a higher income per head of population, and better social services than any country in the world; but these things cannot save us. They may even lull us into a false sense of security. They may hinder our salvation, which can come only through a regeneration of the body and soul of England.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

A NOTE ON STALIN

STALIN, the "man of steel," was born Joseph Vissarionovitch Djugashvili, a poor cobbler's son in a village near Tiflis. Like Mussolini, he was educated to be a priest, but he was a violent and intractable youth. His exploit in 1907 in holding up a bank-van in Tiflis shows that he was readier than some of the other revolutionaries of that time to risk his person in the service of Communism. He and his fellow-conspirators lay in wait for the van, threw a bomb which killed thirty people, and made off with the loot, some £50,000 at the then rate of exchange.

This money was not for himself. No one has ever accused him of lining his pockets at the expense of the cause. It was despatched to Lenin-Ulianov by the hand of the present Foreign Minister, M. Litvinov, who was sent to Paris for the purpose and was arrested there as a receiver of stolen goods. He was soon released, through the help of the Grand Orient of France, and went to live in London with Lenin, working as a purchasing agent for a German munitions firm by day and as a revolutionary by night.

Stalin stayed in Russia. It is impossible not to admire his courage. When others, in the years after the unsuccessful revolution of 1905, were in safety and comparative comfort abroad, Stalin was going from town to town, carrying the pure milk of Marxism, escaping from the Czar's secret police, only to be arrested again in some new lair.

His history is that of his unhappy country. He saw

the lavish lords, the starving peasantry, the corrupt Churches; he fought for his ideals tenaciously, suffering many persecutions and imprisonments. How he escaped, time and again, from his various jails during the years between 1905 and 1912, while Trotsky was intriguing from abroad against the Bolsheviks (Trotsky did not become a regular member of the party until 1917), is a record of adventure as yet unpublished. If the world knew it, much of his ruthlessness would doubtless be explained. Even without the details, it is clear why prisoners so rarely escape in Soviet Russia. I have also been in prisons, not so many as Stalin, but enough to know how *morale* may be broken down. It is knowledge that I would fain forget, but cannot, with the news from Barcelona before me as I write.

In 1912, Stalin was sent to St. Petersburg to join the Central Committee of the then small Bolshevik Party, which had six members representing it in the Russian Parliament (the Duma) and a daily newspaper, the *Pravda*. Stalin controlled this press, and this group, from a hiding-place in St. Petersburg; but he was betrayed in 1913 and sent to the Arctic Circle. For more than three years he lived in bleak and bitter exile, unable to elude his jailers, and cut off from his fellows, but improving his mind by reading history and classical authors. He read not only Russian authors, but Shakespeare and Goethe in translation. To-day his knowledge of foreign countries, though theoretical, is said to be immense.

Lenin's verdict on him may have been right, but it may also have been wrong, the judgment of a tired man. Lovable he cannot be, but his capacity is proven. He has a sound mind in a sound body, a cool judgment, and great grasp of detail. It is unlikely that he is flattered by the present courtship of the democracies; but it is always possible—I do not say probable—that he will see

that it would be to his advantage to liquidate the Comintern and to bring Russia back into the civilized world.

If he came to such a conclusion, could he carry it through? He is certainly trusted by the local rulers of the U.S.S.R. (the 1,600,000 Communists who hold all the key positions), but we must remember that the Comintern has grown to be an international Colossus. Stalin probably has his hands too full of immediate tasks to venture on a disturbance of the cherished tenets of world revolution. Moreover, the approach to capitalist countries will be difficult. We seem to trust Soviet Russia, but no other Government does. Hatred of Communism has bitten so deeply into the mentality of the nations that have seen it at close quarters that nothing short of a revolution in the U.S.S.R. would convince them that the Russians could be trusted.

APPENDIX II

A NOTE ON MUSSOLINI

BENITO MUSSOLINI (named after Benito Juarez, the Mexican revolutionary) was born at 2 p.m. on July 29th, 1883, during those days of high summer, under the constellation of Leo, which the Italians call Solleone. His father, Alessandro, was the blacksmith of Predappio, a burly, big-fisted Socialist whose ancestors had been men of account in Bologna and Venice, and who had not so much fallen on evil days as refused to flatter or fawn upon those who might have advanced him in the world. He was a revolutionary, who had been in prison for his views, and he was still prominent enough in local politics to be watched by the police.

The Duce's mother, Rosa Maltoni, came from the neighbouring town of Forlì. She was a slight, sensitive, deeply religious woman, who yet contrived to live happily with her tempestuous and atheistic husband. The Mussolinis were a typically Italian family, devoted to each other. To this day the Duce goes often (once a month when he can) and always in strict privacy, to visit the grave of his parents. And he still mourns the death of Arnaldo, who was his only really intimate friend.

Benito learned the three Rs from his mother, and also how to speak pure Italian, for she was ambitious, and did not allow her family to use the dialect of Romagna in the home. He went to school first in Predappio, then—at fourteen—as a boarder to the Salesian Convent at Faenza, where his mother hoped that he would be trained as a teacher, or perhaps for the Church. But Benito, though studious enough when interested, was an intractable and

mischievous boy. He would soon have been expelled but for the intervention of his mother, and after a year of trouble and turmoil the Salesian Fathers said they could do no more with him. He was then sent to a school for teachers at Forlimpopoli, where he gained his diploma at the age of seventeen. He had already read Marx and Machiavelli. Owing to his father's politics (and his own) the educational authorities regarded him with some suspicion, but eventually he obtained a post, at 10s. a week, as extra assistant-master of the day school at Gualtieri, near Reggio Emilia.

Gualtieri is a wretched little place, and Mussolini—then eighteen—determined to get out of it as soon as he could. He would have emigrated to the United States, as so many of his countrymen did at the beginning of this century, if his family had had enough money to pay his passage. Instead, he left for Switzerland, with only a couple of shillings in his pocket after buying his ticket for Lausanne.

By the shores of Lake Lemman he supported himself precariously, as a mason and as an odd-job man, taking whatever employment he could find that would enable him to attend the evening lectures on political science at Lausanne University. One of the lecturers was a compatriot of his, from Forlì, Professor Pascal Boninsegni, with whom Mussolini has ever since maintained a close friendship. It was from him, he said later, that he had "learned to distinguish between things as they are and things as one would wish them to be"—no doubt the best of all equipment for ambitious youth in any land or age.

The world knows little of Mussolini's years in Switzerland, and he is himself reticent on the subject. We know that, like Hitler, he was for some time penniless, and a wanderer, educating himself in life's hardest school. Both

men were unsuccessful in the sense that their gifts were not such as to win them quick affluence, but neither has regretted the toughening he received in adolescence. Mussolini often went hungry, as Hitler did, but he seems not to have suffered like Hitler, because he was strong, healthy, with plenty of Socialist friends and sympathizers. It was during this period that he went to Marseilles to organize a strike amongst the dockers there, and was expelled from France. When he returned to Switzerland, the police of Geneva, where he had established himself, discovered that he was a revolutionary, and expelled him from their canton. He was under a similar threat of expulsion from Lausanne (how one would like to know the details, but dictators are too busy making history to write it for the student of psychology!) when he decided to return to Italy in order to perform his military service. His Socialist friends, pacifists almost to a man, begged him to stay, but Mussolini craved for adventure.

We see him, then, in 1904, in the green plumes of a rifleman, serving in the famous corps of Bersaglieri. He enjoyed the comradeship of the army, and indeed, without this training, who knows what course he might have steered? He was a violent, impulsive youth: the army gave him a sense of direction, and centred his thoughts on Italy.

The unexpected death of his mother, while he was serving, affected him very deeply. As eldest son, he was excused the remainder of his training. His fortune was again at its ebb. He had neither money nor work. After a brief period in Predappio he obtained a post as French master at Oneglia. But here he again allowed politics to interfere with his prospects, and quarrelled with the local Board of Education. Once more he travelled north, this time to the Trentino, where he at last found scope for his talent, for he was employed on an irredentist newspaper.

Here he remained four years, with occasional journeys into Switzerland. Eventually an article urging the Italian claims to the Trentino caused the Austro-Hungarian police to expel him.

When he returned to Italy in 1909, at the age of twenty-six, he was a journalist of experience, with an exceptional gift for vivid prose, a labour leader who had suffered for the cause, an exponent of dialectical materialism (for he had lived with Russian exiles in Geneva, and met Lenin), and was the author of two books, a biography of John Huss and a novel, the *Cardinal's Mistress*. With a good constitution and a prodigious memory, he was a very different man at twenty-six to the boy who had left Italy to seek his fortune at seventeen. His father, meanwhile, had given up his business as a blacksmith, for he was growing old, and had taken a public-house, The Lamb, on the outskirts of Forlì. The kitchenmaid was Rachele Agostini, a gracious, quiet, unassuming girl, whom Mussolini subsequently married.

His career was now set steadily towards political journalism, but as a revolutionary Socialist a living was still not easy to make. He translated Heine's *Reisebilder* into Italian, and canvassed Socialist friends in Forlì until they helped him to start a weekly journal, *The Class Struggle*. From that day, in 1910, he never looked back.

He had a gift for epigram, a twist of sardonic humour in his sentences. Soon he was known throughout Northern Italy as a brilliant critic of the Parliamentary régime and of the elderly politicians who blighted the aspirations of Italian youth in those days. Nor did he confine himself to writing. He was a bitter, effective debater, urging a creed of direct action. In Forlì he led several riots, and was several times in the police court for creating a disturbance.

The most serious of his quarrels with authority occurred

in the autumn of 1911 when Italy invaded Libya. Mussolini, as a Socialist, objected to this Imperialist enterprise: he wanted a free and prosperous country, not a large, tyrannical Empire. A strike began at Forlì organized by Mussolini, which lasted two days and was only suppressed by mounted police. He was arrested, tried, and condemned to a year's imprisonment. After five months, however, he received an amnesty.

Soon afterwards, in the summer of 1912, he was appointed editor of the *Avanti!* of Milan, the leading Socialist paper of Italy. Here, indeed, was success for a self-made man of twenty-nine. He threw himself with furious energy into his new task, and soon increased the circulation of the *Avanti!* from 30,000 to 90,000 readers.

One day we may know just when his enthusiasm for revolutionary Socialism began to wane. As a boy, taught by his idealistic mother and his uncompromising father, he had rebelled against the inefficiency of the existing Liberal Governments, and believed that Socialism might make a clean sweep of shams. But in Milan he was not so sure. The editor of a newspaper in a great industrial city sees many of the seamy sides of life; and must develop, if he is to be successful, a protecting mask of cynicism, however warm the heart beneath it. Mussolini is a student as well as a countryman of Macchiavelli, and has learned the lesson of *The Prince*. In the early summer of 1914, when a widespread Communist rising known as Red Week occurred in Italy, he watched the demonstrations in Ravenna and in Forlì, at first with sympathy, but his eyes hardened when he saw the disorganization, the drunkenness, the destruction of property which followed on mob-rule. He realized that the masses needed a leader, and doubtless then determined that he would be that leader. Georges Sorel, the Labour veteran, wrote of him: "Our Mussolini is not an ordinary Socialist. Believe me,

you will perhaps yet see him at the head of a sacred battalion, saluting with his uplifted sword the Italian flag. He is an Italian of the fifteenth century: the only energetic man capable of mending the weaknesses of his Government."

Prophetic words, fulfilled within ten years!

* * * * *

The first *Fasci di Combattimento* were founded by Mussolini and d'Annunzio in 1914, as war groups to bring Italy to the side of the Allied Powers. The first Fascist meeting in Milan, of March 23rd, 1919, was a re-dedication of those who had worked for intervention, and a vow was then made that the fruits of victory should not be lost to Italy.

"I called the organization *Fasci Italiani di Combattimento*," Mussolini told an audience later, "because this hard, metallic name included the whole programme of Fascism as I dreamed of it, as I wished it to be, and as I have made it."

The *fascies* were bundles of rods for scourging criminals, with an axe in the centre, carried by the lictors of ancient Rome, the attendants on the magistrates, whose symbol of authority they were. The tying together of the bundle into one represented the strength of unity, and the axe justice. The words *Italiani* and *Combattimento* denoted that Fascism was for Italians a racial doctrine, representing for them "the continuity of their stock and their history," and that it was a fighting creed, for "struggle is at the origin of all things."

More definitely, in his article on Fascism in the Italian Encyclopædia, which should be read carefully by anyone who desires to understand the new Italy, Mussolini states:

"As far as concerns the future development of mankind, quite apart from all present-day political considerations,

Fascism does not on the whole believe in the possibility or the utility of perpetual peace. War alone keys up all the energies of man to their greatest pitch, and sets the mark of nobility on those nations which have the bravery to face it. All doctrines which postulate peace at any price as their premise are incompatible with Fascism. Fascism carries this anti-pacifist attitude into the life of the individual. '*Me ne frego*' ('I don't give a damn!'), scrawled on his bandages by a wounded man, became the motto of our Storm-Troopers, and it sums up a doctrine which is not merely political; it is the evidence of a fighting spirit which accepts all risks. It stands for a new mode of life of the Italians.

"Fascism is the resolute negation of the doctrine underlying so-called scientific and Marxian Socialism, the doctrine of historic materialism which would explain the history of mankind in terms of the class struggle. Fascism believes now and always in sanctity and heroism—that is to say, in acts wherein no economic motive, immediate or remote, is at work.

"Besides attacking Socialism, Fascism points its guns at the whole block of democratic ideologies, and rejects both their premises and their practical application and methods.

"Democratic régimes may be described as those under which the people are deluded from time to time into the belief that they are exercising sovereignty, while all the time real sovereignty belongs to other forces, sometimes irresponsible and secret. Democracy is a kingless régime, infested by many kings.

"Fascism is definitely and absolutely opposed to the doctrines of Liberalism, both in the political and in the economic sphere. The importance of Liberalism in the nineteenth century must not be exaggerated for present-day controversial purposes, nor should we make out of one of the many theories which flourished in that century a religion for all mankind. After tying itself up with innumerable Gordian knots, the 'Liberal Century' tried to cut them with the sword of the world war. Never has any religion claimed a more cruel sacrifice.

"Now Liberalism is preparing to close the doors of its temples, for it has been deserted by the majority of the peoples of Europe, who feel that the agnosticism it professes in the sphere of economics, and the indifferentism of which it has given proof in the sphere of politics and ethics, will lead the world to ruin in the future as it has in the past.

"This explains why all the political experiments of our

day are anti-Liberal; and, on this account, it is supremely ridiculous to endeavour to put them outside the pale of history, as though history were a preserve set aside for Liberalism and its adepts, as though Liberalism were the last word in civilization beyond which no man can go.

"A party wielding totalitarian rule over a nation is a new departure in history. There are no points of reference or comparison. From beneath the ruins of Liberal, Socialist, and Democratic doctrines, Fascism recovers the elements which are still vital. It rejects the idea of a doctrine suited to all times and peoples. Political doctrines pass, nations remain.

"The keystone of the Fascist doctrine is its conception of the State. The State is absolute, individuals and groups are relative.

"The Fascist State is not a night-watchman, solicitous only of the personal safety of the citizens, nor is it organized exclusively for the purpose of guaranteeing a certain degree of material prosperity and relatively peaceful conditions of life; a board of directors could do that. The State guarantees the safety of the country at home and abroad, and it also safeguards and hands down the spirit of the people, elaborated through the ages in its language, its customs, its faith.

"The State is not only the present, it is also the past, and above all the future. Transcending the individual's brief spell of life, the State stands for the inherent conscience of the nation.

"Never before have the nations thirsted for authority, direction, order, as they do now. If every age has its own doctrine, then numberless signs point out Fascism as the doctrine of our age."

The conclusion is now out-of-date. The average citizen of Italy, as of Germany, has had his glut of authority, direction, and order, and would now like to drink his wine or beer in peace. Adults in totalitarian States are tired of hero-worship, and bored with propaganda. The pendulum is swinging, if not towards democracy as we know it, at least away from Cæsarism.

APPENDIX III

A NOTE ON HITLER

ADOLF HITLER's father, Alois, was the son of an itinerant miller, Johann Hiedler (for so the family spelled its name a hundred years ago), of the village of Spital, in Upper Austria, by a peasant woman named Maria Schicklgrüber. Alois must have been a boy of very enterprising temperament, for he ran away from home at the age of thirteen with a few shillings in his pocket, and made his living as a cobbler in Vienna, where also he managed to learn to read and write.

When he was twenty-three he married his first wife, Anna Gläsl-Horer, a woman of some means, who was fourteen years his senior. By her he had two children, Alois, Jr., and Angela, half-brother and half-sister of the German Chancellor. Alois had by now educated himself, and obtained a post in the Austro-Hungarian Customs Service at Branau, on the German frontier. Anna died in 1883, and Alois almost immediately married again, but his second wife died within the year. His third wife, the Chancellor's mother, was pretty Klara Poelzl, a peasant girl from Spital, whose mother, Johanna, was a cousin of Johann Hiedler. So Klara was her husband's second cousin once removed.

The Chancellor's parents were a handsome pair; she, blonde, slender, with great, tender eyes and a sensitive face; he, a fine figure of a man, inclined to stoutness in later life, with bushy whiskers and a heavy moustache drooping over a powerful jaw. Both were of sound peasant stock, God-fearing, and ambitious in their way. Alois had risen from being a homeless boy to a respected Customs official. Klara had left Spital at an early age to

see the world, earning her living by domestic service. Their first two children died in infancy. Adolf, the eldest survivor, was born in a little house on the main street of Branau-on-the-Inn, on April 20th, 1889, when his father was fifty-two and his mother twenty-nine years of age. Two other children were born after Adolf, Paula, who now lives in Vienna, and Edouard, who died in infancy.

In 1896 Alois Hitler retired from the Customs Service, and the family went to live at the village of Leonding, near the cathedral town of Linz, in order to be near a good school for Adolf. Next year Paula was born, and her mother developed symptoms of an internal disease which proved to be cancer.

Adolf, with his mischievous dark-blue eyes and perky face, was described in one of his school reports as "lazy and self-willed." The only subjects which interested him were history, drawing, and geography. Outside school hours he listened with absorbed attention to Professor Pötsch, an active member of the German National Party, who used to tell the pupils how the birthright of the Austrians was being bartered for a mess of Slav pottage: the Emperor's heir had even married a Czech nobody.

Alois Hitler wanted his son to follow him in his career as a Customs official, but Adolf flouted the notion: he hated office work and wanted to be an artist. Alois was very angry at this absurd suggestion, and for the last three years of his life the relations between father and son were strained. Alois died on a January morning, in 1903, of a heart attack, while reading the paper 'at the village inn.

So Adolf and Paula, aged 14 and 7, were left with their mother, who already knew that she was dying. She moved to Linz, and lived there on her small pension with the two children.

Adolf's lungs were delicate, and the doctor recommended that he should cease attending school and remain

as much as possible in the open air. He sketched, talked politics, looked after his mother. In 1907 he went to Vienna, and applied for admission to the painting school of the State Academy; but the authorities gave him little encouragement; they suggested that his talent was architectural, and that he should apply for admission to the School of Architecture. Here the Director showed interest in his work, and would have taken him as a pupil had he been able to pass the necessary examination. But how could Adolf pass any examination when he had roamed free as his own master for the last three years?

At eighteen Adolf Hitler was a failure. His mother died in 1908, and with her death her pension ceased. The cottage was sold, and Adolf gave all the proceeds to Paula. Then he returned to Vienna and started to conquer the world from there, alone, penniless, untrained, with a strong aversion from any kind of work that did not interest him, an artist to his sensitive finger-tips. "The difficulties of life," he writes in *Mein Kampf*, "hardened my spirit and taught me how to live. I thank those days for the fact that I grew hard, and can be hard." He laid bricks, shovelled snow, learned the trade of a plasterer, broke his nails on the mason's hod. Often he went without food to find the money to hear Wagner or Mozart from the gallery of the Opera.

I have seen, as everyone interested can see, the sketches which Hitler made a few years later, on the Western Front, during his intervals of leisure as a despatch rider. It is easy to be wise after the event, but I feel that the Academy which rejected his work in 1907 must have been wrong, and failed, as academies often do, to recognize talent. To me his sketches have an instinct for line and proportion, and a sense of style which has now found its expression in the buildings and motor roads of the Third Reich, as well as in his speeches.

In Vienna, in those days before the Great War, the idea occurred to him that he might earn more money by designing show-cards than by manual labour. This occupation took him to all sorts of little shops in the poor parts of the city, and it was here that he learned to hate the Jews.

He detested his life in this racial Babylon, this meeting-place for all the peoples of a ramshackle Empire. He noted the commercial cunning, the cosmopolitanism, the luxury and vice of the Imperial capital, and hated it with the intensity of a country boy, romantic by temperament, who had grown up sheltered by a mother's love.

When he went to Salzburg to present himself for military training, he was rejected as unfit: he was half-starved, and had not yet outgrown the trouble in his lungs. In 1912, at the age of 23, and still a failure, he went to Munich to see whether the tradesmen of Bavaria would take more kindly than those of Vienna to his show cards.

Politics, music, and visits to art galleries were his only amusements. Sometimes he took a glass of beer in those early days, while listening to a political discussion, but food and drink had no lure for him. Nor had sex. As far as is known (and his opponents have been diligent in their attempts to discover evidence that might be used against him, but with no success) he has never had any sex relations at all. Always his eyes were fixed on high horizons.

When the Great War came he volunteered immediately for service in the German Army, and was enrolled as a volunteer in a Bavarian regiment. His official record of service repays careful examination, for it shows what fine service he gave his country: a service given by many others, it is true, who are unknown to fame, but never given save by men cast in a heroic mould.

He saw thirty-six actions on the Western Front. From August 16th, 1914, to October 20th, 1918, when he was painfully blinded by gas, he had only two home leaves of a fortnight each, and a seven weeks' spell in hospital with shrapnel splinters in his leg. He was awarded the Iron Cross of the 2nd Class in December, 1914, and the Iron Cross of the 1st Class in August, 1918. The latter distinction (very rarely given to non-commissioned officers) he gained for capturing seven or eight enemy soldiers single-handed, and marching them back to his battalion headquarters at the point of his revolver. The date is noteworthy, for German morale was not high in August, 1918.

Here is his full record of service, which I have translated from the Munich archives:

No. 7111 Lance-Corporal Adolf Hitler:

Catholic, born at Branau, Upper Austria, on April 20th, 1889, artist-painter, of Schleissheimerstrasse 14/3, Munich, bachelor. Father, Alois Hitler, late Inspector of Customs at Linz, Austria. Mother, Klara Poelzl, both Catholics, both deceased.

Hospital Record:

Oct. 9th to Dec. 1st, 1916. Prussian Red Cross Hospital, Beelitz, wounded by shell splinter in left thigh.

Oct. 15th to Oct. 16th, 1918. Bavarian Field Hospital No. 53, Oudenarde, gas poisoning.

Oct. 21st to Nov. 19th, 1918. Prussian Reserve Hospital, Pasewalk, gas poisoning.

Leave of Absence:

Sept. 30th to Oct. 17th, 1917. Home leave.

Aug. 23rd to Aug. 30th, 1918. Duty to Nürnberg.

Sept. 10th to Sept. 27th, 1918. Home leave.

Service Record:

Aug. 16th, 1914. Enlisted as a volunteer in the 6th Company of the 1st Battalion of the 2nd Royal Bavarian Infantry Regiment (Elizabeth Barracks).

- Sept. 1st, 1914. Transferred to the 1st Company of Bavarian Reserve Infantry Regiment No. 16 (Liszt Regiment).
Oct. 21st, 1914. Transferred to Field Service.
Nov. 1st, 1914. Appointed Lance-Corporal.
Nov. 9th, 1914. Appointed to Company Headquarters Staff of 1st Company Bavarian Reserve Infantry Regiment No. 16.
Oct. 27th, 1915. Transferred to the 3rd Company B.R.I.R. No. 16.
Oct. 5th, 1916. Wounded at La Bargaue and transferred to hospital.
Dec. 3rd, 1916. Left hospital, detailed to the 4th Company of the 1st Substitute Battalion of the 2nd B.R.I.R.
Mar. 5th, 1917. Field service with 3rd Company of B.R.I.R. No. 16.
Oct. 15th, 1918. Transferred to hospital with gas poisoning, from La Montagne.
Nov. 21, 1918. Left hospital, detailed to the 7th Company of 1st Substitute Battalion of the 2nd B.R.I.R.
Feb. 12th, 1919. Detailed to the 2nd demobilization company of the 2nd B.R.I.R.
May 10th, 1919. Detailed to the 7th demobilization company of the 2nd B.R.I.R.
Mar. 31st, 1920. Demobilized.

Decorations and Mentions :

- Dec. 2nd, 1914. Awarded Iron Cross, 2nd class.
Sept. 17th, 1917. Awarded Bavarian Military Medal, 3rd Class with bar.
May 9th, 1918. Cited in orders for distinguished conduct in the field.
May 18th, 1918. Cited in orders for distinguished conduct in the field.
Aug. 4th, 1918. Awarded Iron Cross, 1st Class.
Aug. 25th, 1918. Cited in orders for distinguished conduct in the field.

Battles, 1914:

- Oct. 29th. Yser battle.
Oct. 30th to Nov. 24th. Ypres battles.
Nov. 25th to Dec. 13th. Front line trenches in Flanders.
Dec. 14th to Dec. 24th. December battles in French Flanders.

Battles, 1915:

Dec. 25th, 1914, to Mar. 9. Front line trenches in French Flanders.

Mar. 10th to Mar. 14th. Third battle on Neuve Chapelle.

Mar. 15th to May 8th. Front line trenches in French Flanders.

May 9th to July 23rd. Battles of La Bassée and Arras.

July 24th to Sept. 24th. Front in French Flanders.

Sept. 25th to Oct. 13th. Autumn battles at La Bassée and Arras.

Battles, 1916:

Oct. 14th, 1915, to Feb. 29th. Front in French Flanders.

Mar. 1st to June 23rd. Front in French Flanders and Artois.

June 24th to July 7th. Reconnaissance and demonstration battles of the 6th Army in connection with the Somme Battle.

July 8th to July 18. Front in French Flanders

July 19th to July 20th. Battle of Fromelles.

July 21st to Sept. 25. Front in French Flanders.

Sept. 26 to Oct. 5th. Somme Battle.

Battles, 1917:

Mar. 5th to April 26th. Front in French Flanders.

April 27th to May 20th. Spring battles of Arras.

May 21st to June 24. Front in Artois.

June 25th to July 21st. Flanders battle, first part.

July 22nd to Aug. 3rd. Flanders battle, second part.

Aug. 4th to Sept. 30th. Front in Alsace-Lorraine.

Oct. 17th to Nov. 2nd. Rearguard action near Ailette.

Battles, 1918:

Nov. 3rd, 1917, to Mar. 25. Front north of Ailette.

Mar. 26th to April 6th. March offensive in France.

April 7th to April 24th. Battle of Montdidier.

April 28th to May 26th. Front north of Ailette.

May 27th to June 13th. Battles of Soissons and Rheims.

June 14th to June 30th. Front between the Oise and Marne.

July 5th to July 14th. Front between the Oise and Marne.

July 15th to July 17th. Attacks on Marne and in Champagne.

July 18th to July 25th. Defence battle between Soissons and Rheims.

July 26th to July 29th. Rearguard action between the Marne and Vosle.

Aug. 21st to Aug. 23rd. Battles at Monchy and Bapaume.

Aug. 28th to Oct. 15th. Rearguard action in Flanders.

Special Duties:

Battalion bicyclist.

Conduct:

Very good.

Punishments:

Nil.

Demobilized:

March 31st, 1920, with no claims outstanding against the State.

This is surely not the record of a hysteric or neurotic, as his enemies declare him to be: it is the history of a humble-minded man who stuck to his job, and did his duty. To-day he seems to have conceived a mission to liberate Europe from Communism. It is a pity for all concerned (except the Communists) that his methods make co-operation so difficult.

APPENDIX IV

THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF BENES

CZECHO-SLOVAKIA might still exist, and we might never have been involved in the crisis of September, 1938, if the entirely reasonable demands of the Sudeten Germans formulated by Herr Henlein in April, 1938, had been conceded in time. That is my view, and it is quite likely I am wrong: it is a view of one of the "might-have-beens" of history, impossible of proof. It is not without interest, however, even if the interest be somewhat academic, to recall the circumstances which led the Czechs to lose the Sudetenland.

When I was in Prague last May, I went to the Exhibition of Baroque Art. It was enchanting. Those ecstatic angels with quiffs, and those buxom, laughing maidens—especially the one with a rising sun carved on her breast—displayed a terrific vital energy, a will to achieve the impossible, which was attractive and impressive, and made one want to learn more about the Baroque movement. But the only available catalogue of the Exhibition was in Czech, a language that not one in a hundred foreign visitors can speak. Yet the greater part of the sculpture was German. That was a measure of Czech stupidity in dealing with their racial problems.

"Many of the acts of persecution complained of are almost incredibly petty," wrote a *Times* correspondent regarding the Sudetenland, "but this very quality serves to enhance their power of breeding bitterness." German railway time-tables were confiscated because they bore the *swastika*. An old Sudeten official was deprived of his pension of £5 a month because he had christened

his son Horst Wenzel, which was considered too like that of the Nazi martyr, Horst Wessel. The unfortunate father, however, had been thinking only of good King Wenceslas. . . . I heard also of a Sudeten German postmaster who was deprived of his position as being "unreliable" when it was found that he had visited his mother in Dresden four times in the last nine years. No other charge was proved or even made against him. He was not physically maltreated, but had he been murdered his relations could hardly have hated the Czechs more.

Czechs and Germans have lived together and quarrelled together in Bohemia and Moravia for the past 1,500 years. Under the Austro-Hungarian Empire the Czechs conspired continually to gain their freedom. Some would have been content with autonomy, but many of them, notably Dr. Masaryk and his disciple, Dr. Edouard Benes, hoped always that some turn of Fate would give them the opportunity to establish an independent republic. Dr. Benes is still hoping.

History is still ignorant of the rôle played by the Lodges of the Grand Orient in Prague, Berlin, and Paris in the drama whose first act ended with the murder of the Archduke Francis Joseph and his morganatic Czech wife at Sarajevo; but it is generally believed that certain Lodges* had condemned the Archduke to death in 1913. The World War which resulted from this murder was the chance that Dr. Masaryk and Dr. Benes had long awaited. Three Czech regiments in the Austro-Hungarian army deserted bodily to their Slav kinsfolk during 1914. Thereafter, under the guidance and inspiration of Dr. Benes and Lieutenant (now General) Sirovy, mutiny

* English Freemasonry has nothing to do with international or any other politics. It does not recognize the Grand Orient; and forbids the discussion of political affairs in any Lodge under the Constitution of the Free and Accepted Masons of England.

and desertion became frequent, and 50,000 Czechs joined the Allied Powers. Meanwhile other Czechs worked for the disintegration of the Central Powers from within. In the United States, Dr. Masaryk won the support of his *émigré* compatriots, and he gained also the ear of President Wilson by skilful flattery, so that five months before the end of the World War he had obtained numerous wealthy and influential Czech and Slovak signatories to the famous Pittsburg Agreement of May 30th, 1918, by which the Czechs and Slovaks agreed to form a Czecho-Slovak Republic.

While the frontiers of Bohemia were being discussed at Versailles, the Sudeten Germans held a plebiscite, and voted by an overwhelming majority to rejoin Austria. (It will be remembered that Austria at this time also voted by an overwhelming majority to become part of Germany.) It is hardly surprising, therefore, that this people, which wanted to be German in 1919, should be of the same mind in 1938. The only matter for surprise is that anyone should have thought otherwise, and that it would be possible to induce Germans, Poles, Hungarians, and Ruthenians to submit permanently to the inferior position to which they were relegated by the rude and arrogant Czechs. (As to the Slovaks, they were soon to discover that the autonomy promised them by the Pittsburg Agreement existed only on paper.) The late Dr. Masaryk, however, may be absolved from the inclusion of the Sudetens in Czecho-Slovakia, for in Paris he advised the French that they should be returned to the Weimar Republic. "Certainly not," said the French. "You must have them! They were part of the ancient kingdom of Bohemia, and where would your frontiers be without the Sudeten highlands?" All that the statesmen of the victorious Powers wanted was an excuse to encircle Germany.

A memorandum (here abbreviated) presented by Dr. Benes to the Allied Powers in Paris on May 20th, 1919, shows clearly what the idealists hoped that Czecho-Slovakia might become. It was never made public, for its promises were never kept, until it was printed in Berlin in 1937 by the Institute for Foreign and Racial Justice :

"It is the intention of the Czecho-Slovak Government to create the organization of the State by accepting as a basis of national rights the principles applied in the constitution of the Swiss Republic—that is, to make the Czecho-Slovak* Republic a sort of Switzerland, taking into consideration, of course, the special conditions in Bohemia.

"Schools will be maintained by the State, throughout its territory, from the public funds, and will be established for the various nationalities in all the communes where the number of children, legally ascertained, prove the necessity of establishing such schools.

"All public offices, in which, in principle, the languages will have equal value, will be open to the various nationalities inhabiting the Republic.

"The Courts will be mixed, and Germans will have the right to plead before the highest Courts in their own language.

"The local administration (of communes and 'circles') will be carried on in the language of the majority of the population."

Not one of these promises was ever carried out. For twenty years the Sudeten Germans protested that German schools were neglected, that Czech and not German officials were appointed in German districts, that Germans could not plead in their own language in the High Courts, and that nothing even faintly resembling the Swiss system was introduced, or even contemplated, in Czecho-Slovakia.

The League of Nations did not remedy any of the injustices brought to its notice. Twenty-two complaints

* The hyphen should be noted. Soon the Slovaks had cause to complain that their country was no longer spelt with a capital letter, but merged into Czechoslovakia.

were made by the Sudeten Germans between 1920 and 1930, and about a dozen from Hungarians, Slovaks, and Ruthenes; none of them was enquired into on the spot or brought to the notice of the Supreme Council in Geneva.

By 1931 the economic distress in the Sudeten districts had reached shocking proportions: unemployment was three and a half times higher than in Czech districts of Czecho-Slovakia, and their death-rate and suicide-rate were the highest in Europe.

In districts with 80 per cent. of Germans, Czechs were given 80 per cent. of all public orders and commissions. Thus at Schreckenstein, when a dam was being built in a region inhabited by 102,000 Germans out of 129,000 inhabitants, 90 per cent. of the workmen employed were Czechs, depriving the German community of some £65,000 of public money, which should have been spent on relieving German unemployment.

More than 1,853,000 acres of forests, pasture, and arable land were taken from the Sudeten Germans as a consequence of the Land Reform Act of 1920, and more than 60,000 Sudeten German owners and workers lost their livelihoods in consequence. In the Sudeten districts roads were built by Czech labourers, so that Sudeten unemployed were forced to stand idle, seeing strangers earn wages that should have gone to them.

According to the Census of 1921, Czecho-Slovakia comprised the following nationalities:

Czechs	...	6,840,000 inhabitants or 48.0 per cent. of population			
Germans	...	3,218,000	"	24.3	"
Slovaks	...	1,179,000	"	14.7	"
Hungarians		800,000	"	5.9	"
Ruthenians		500,000	"	3.7	"
Jews	...	200,000	"	1.5	"
Others	...	270,000	"	1.9	"
		<hr/> 13,007,000		<hr/> 100.0	

The Census taken in 1930, when Czech rule was more firmly established, gives the following figures:

Czechs ...	7,406,493	inhabitants or	51·25	per cent. of population
Germans	3,231,688	"	22·25	" "
Slovaks ...	2,282,277	"	15·75	" "
Hungarians	691,923	"	4·75	" "
Ruthenians	549,169	"	3·75	" "
Jews ...	168,642	"	1·25	" "
Others ...	131,373	"	1·00	" "
	<hr/> 14,461,565		<hr/> 100·00	

The Czechs, therefore, if they were a majority at all in Czecho-Slovakia, which is doubtful, were only a very small majority.

According to these statistics, the Sudetens should have had a right to at least 22 per cent. of public offices. In 1921 there were 26,460 Sudeten railway officials; in 1930 there were only 14,016, a reduction of 47 per cent. In 1921 there were 10,022 Sudeten post-office officials; in 1930 there were only 5,897, a reduction of 41 per cent. In 1921 there were 41 district governors of German origin and 20 of Czech origin in the Sudeten districts; in 1931 there were 58 Czech district governors and only 8 German district governors. More than 40,000 Sudeten-German officials lost their positions during the nineteen years of Czech rule in Bohemia.

In 1937 an attempt was made—I believe a sincere attempt—by Dr. Benes and his Prime Minister, Dr. Hodza (himself a Slovak), to remedy this disproportion between the officials of the two races; but the Czech nationalist organizations in Prague—notably the Narodne Jednota—proved too strong for the conciliators.

"We would like to trust the Czechs," a spokesman of Herr Henlein told me, "but one must judge by results, and after twelve months' talk no progress has been made. For instance, in Katerinaburg, where there are 1,544

Sudetens and 33 Czechs, the last Sudeten official was pensioned on March 1st of this year (1938). His successor is a Czech.

"In Winterschau, where 75 per cent. of the population are Sudetens, the last Sudeten postman has just been retired on pension. His successor is a Czech.

"In Komotau, whose population is also 75 per cent. Sudeten, the only change in the proportion of officials during the last four years has been the appointment of four new Czechs."

And so on. Much the League of Nations cared!

During my visit in March, 1938, I saw with my own eyes that everywhere the Narodne Jednota had pursued its work of "Czechization" with ruthless efficiency. Karlsbad and Marienbad, thriving cure resorts before the Great War, were ghosts of their former selves, and Teplitz-Schönau, another watering-place, was half-desolate. It was snowing when I left Teplitz and drove through the bleak industrial neighbourhood of Dux. There I saw factory after factory deserted, with broken windows, like the eye-sockets of a skull, and indeed they were the corpses of industries killed in this racial quarrel.

Men and women looked haggard with hunger, and children were blue with cold. Many families dwelt in caves, cubby-holes, shacks. Some made a living by scraping coal from the frozen earth. Sad-eyed, shivering dogs lay waiting under the miners' tattered coats to draw the coal-sledges to the nearest town.

The stark misery I saw here was worse than that in South Wales during the depression. The only comparable scene in my experience was famine, again among Germans, on the Volga in 1931. But that was summer. Here it was snowing, and the sky dark with the promise of harder frost.

I returned to Prague on May 23rd, just after the Czech mobilization, which had brought Europe to the brink of war. Shares in the Skoda factories had fallen by £1 a share in a few hours, and speculators in calamity had made handsome profits on the curb market near the Wilson Station.

Motor-bicyclists stood ready at all Government offices. Detachments of troops were marching through the streets. The atmosphere was tense, but the daily life of Prague went on much as usual. Statues on the old bridge were being regilded in preparation for the celebrations of twenty years of independence. A bevy of schoolgirls went singing through the streets to the Hrad, the castle where the Austrian ambassadors were defenestrated three hundred years ago, and where Dr. Benes was then living.

Rumour was rife (and I believe rumour spoke true) that the Chief of the General Staff, General Krejci, had ordered the mobilization of the army against the advice of the Prime Minister, but with the consent of the President, Dr. Benes.

M. Gabriel Peri, the French Communist, who was in Prague during these fateful days, was one of the authors of the statement that Germany had mobilized. Another agent who spread this untrue story appears to have been a member of the British Secret Service reporting to Vienna, where, unfortunately, our information often came from sources tainted by racial hate.

The truth is that at this time Germany did not move a man or a gun toward the Czech frontier. Subsequently this was admitted even by Left-Wing writers, who explained that it was "a partial and secret mobilization," displaying thereby either their ignorance of military matters or their contempt for the intelligence of their readers. Why should Germany order a partial and secret

mobilization, and how could it have been secret? None of the recent mobilizations have been secret. It would have shaken the régime to the core to have assembled an army and then disbanded it in face of the Czechs. Indeed the idea is fantastic, a typical Comintern *canard*. When Germany *did* contemplate invasion, and the world-war that might have followed, an army of a million men stood ready.

Incontestably the Czech General Staff, and Dr. Benes, must have known on Friday, May 20th, that Germany had not mobilized. Yet they called up a considerable part of the Czech reserves and all their specialists, and sent them under war conditions into the Sudeten zones. The conclusion is inescapable: Dr. Benes hoped that his action would lead either (a) to a German mobilization which would have summoned France and Russia to his aid, or (b) to some incident on the part of the Sudeten Germans which would have entitled him to take severe repressive measures against them.

The week-end passed in intense anxiety. Our Ambassador in Berlin was warned to prepare for the worst. Gas-masks were issued to the citizens of Prague. A Czech policeman shot two Sudeten Germans travelling near the frontier. Czech aeroplanes flew over German territory. Czech soldiers erected barricades, cut down trees, and established themselves under war conditions in peaceful Sudeten villages.

"I have just been through the Sudeten districts," I telephoned to the *Observer*, "and wish that those who say that the unfortunate people here are 'the best-treated minority in Europe,' could have come with me to Brux, Dux, Komotau, and seen the Czech troops swarming over the countryside.

"Yesterday I left Prague by car for the north-west. Leitmaritz is full of armed men, but this town is on the border of Czech-German territory, where military preparations do not do any great harm. But beyond, in the German towns

and villages, troops are bringing dismay and distress, if not panic, amongst an extremely well-behaved population.

"At Aussig, which is purely German, the new £250,000 bridge is guarded by Czech soldiers; a dynamite charge is affixed below the girders at the southern end, and there is a notice to passers-by not to linger at the toll-gate. Many other bridges and roads are mined. On the way to Dux I came upon troops laying an explosive charge, while the local inhabitants looked on in amazement and disgust, for the digging entailed suspension of traffic and a long detour.

"I have before me a sheaf of records of aggression by Czech soldiers and police against civilians in the Sudeten German areas. To describe these in detail is unnecessary. Given the tension that exists and the fact that an alien army cannot but make its presence disagreeably felt, these sworn statements, attested by photographs and medical certificates, must be accepted by any reasonable man. The mercury of racial hate is mounting, and if it reaches boiling-point there must be an explosion.

"Until the army is withdrawn it will be impossible to discuss a settlement in a calm atmosphere."

In England the householder knows little about billeting unless he went to France in the Great War. But on the Continent people know that even the best-disciplined soldiers cause a great deal of trouble and inconvenience, gladly borne when they are one's own army, but a pest when they are foreigners.

On April 24th, 1938, Herr Henlein, the Sudeten German leader, speaking at Karlsbad, made the following "Eight Demands" to the Czecho-Slovak Government:

1. Full equality of status between Czechs and Germans.
2. Recognition of the Sudeten Germans as a legal entity within the State.
3. Determination of the boundaries of the Sudeten German areas within the Czecho-Slovak State.
4. Full self-government for these German areas.
5. Legal protection for every citizen living outside the region of his own nationality.
6. Removal of the injustices inflicted in 1918 and reparations for the injuries caused thereby.

7. Recognition of the principle: German regions, German officials.
8. Full liberty to profess German nationality and German political philosophy.

These demands met with little response on the Czech side. I tried to go over them, point by point, with the chief of the Ministry of Information in Prague, but was answered by exasperating equivocations. "We cannot permit the State to be undermined," I was told. "It would be impossible to co-operate with a Nazi party in a free country such as ours. We have powerful friends and neighbours, who are as determined as we are to preserve democracy in this part of the world. . . ." Preserving democracy! The Czechs propounded various schemes—a Nationalities Statute, a Language Bill, and an Administrative Reform Bill—to stave off the integral solution proposed by Henlein, which was the only solution that might have saved Czecho-Slovakia.

At this time (July, 1938) Prague was the headquarters of the following anti-Nazi groups:

The Communist Information Bureau for Central Europe.
The Central Committee of the Communist Party for Czecho-Slovakia.

Executive of Czecho-Slovakian Red Aid.

Central European Headquarters of the Friends of the U.S.S.R.

Central Committee of the German Communist Party.

Central Committee of the Polish Communist Party, which published the *Novy Przegląd*, and smuggled it regularly into Poland.

Training Centres for German, Roumanian, Bulgarian, and Yugoslavian Schools of Communist Propaganda,

These organizations were assiduous in spreading the idea that the Russians possessed a gigantic force, aimed like a pistol at the heart of Germany, with an army of 1,350,000 men at peace strength, backed by 17,500,000

reserves, 10,000 aeroplanes, and 3,000 tanks. It is true that events revealed of what stuff the feet of this Colossus were made, but at the time its nuisance value was high. "We need Czecho-Slovakia," said M. Cot, the late French Air Minister and friend of Bolshevik Russia, "because German economy and German industry could best be destroyed from this State."

In 1935 the German Government obtained a list of secret agents reporting to Prague, which led to the arrest of 500 Communists in Germany and 50 in Jugoslavia. In the streets and restaurants of the Czecho-Slovak capital I noticed the same deterioration in morals as had accompanied the Social Democratic régime in pre-Nazi Germany: in almost every bookseller's window appeared magazines such as *Plaisirs de Paris*, *Sex-Appéal*, and *Vénus*, "le journal le plus osé."

* * * * *

Soon after Lord Runciman went to Prague, it was announced that German Army manœuvres would be on a larger scale than usual: more than 1,000,000 men would be under arms by September 15th, and 400,000 workmen were already employed on defence works opposite the French Maginot Line.

The Germans had seen the weakness of our position, not the strategical weakness, which any retired major with an atlas could discern, but the moral weakness of the Franco-Soviet pact, and the impossibility of trying permanently to keep the Sudeten Germans from their Fatherland by force of arms.

On August 12th, while Lord Runciman was bridging the gap which divided the demands of the Sudeten leaders from the concessions offered by the Czechs, the Association of Czecho-Slovakia Officers published a manifesto in the *Weekly Military Gazette* of Prague, which showed

that whatever the politicians might say about concessions, the Czech chauvinists were spoiling for a fight.

"In full consciousness of our responsibility," they declared, "and determined to carry out Masaryk's last will, we officers, who are the first to face death, claim the right to raise a warning voice: the authority of the State must in no circumstances be narrowed, undermined, or lowered: no longer by a single action or a single word. We may die, but we cannot fall back by a yard, or even a foot."

These officers were reprimanded, but not otherwise punished. Every War Office in Europe began to overhaul its mobilization schemes.

* * * * *

In October, 1938, when the German troops marched into the Sudetenland, pitiable stories of refugees flying from the "German Terror" filled our newspapers, and were doubtless true in part, although the implications were wrong, and sometimes malicious. A Communist, for example, who had for years intrigued with the Czech authorities against the Sudeten Nazis would certainly be terrified of the retribution that might befall him. Hardships there were, but what of the hardships of the Sudeten population? The Lord Mayor of London opened a fund for the refugees, and £350,000 was subscribed within a month. But not a penny could I have raised—nor any better writer—for the half-starved Sudeten children whom I saw in the neighbourhood of Teplitz-Schonau in March, 1938—children whose families had been forbidden, three months previously, to receive Christmas presents from their relations in Germany, since that would have been "Nazi propaganda."

* * * * *

When Dr. Bencs resigned, on October 5th, 1938, after some very plain speaking on the part of some of his own

countrymen, Lord Cecil, Lord Lytton, and Dr. Gilbert Murray telegraphed to him: "The League of Nations Union begs to express its profound admiration for your Excellency's dignified and heroic attitude during intolerable trials; sees in your resignation the tragic end of a most noble achievement; has confidence in the indestructible vitality of the Czech people; and knows that your Excellency will keep for ever a high place in the heart of all who have known you, and in the pages of history."

Dignity, yes; but "tragic end of a noble achievement"? As a private citizen, Dr. Benes deserves respect, but did these upholders of peace and democracy hope that he would continue to rule over the Sudetens for another twenty years?

APPENDIX V

A NOTE ON PACIFISM

LOOKING at South-Eastern Europe as it is to-day, one would like to ask some representative pacifist (if such there be, for most of them have their own 'doxy) how the decrepit old Turkish Empire could have been transformed into the present progressive Balkan countries except by force, or the threat of force?

I would not reopen the subject of pacifism here, for I have already written a book on the subject, if the question were not so much in the air to-day. To-day, with the plain necessity before us of conscription—call it by what name we will—it seems that many of us still hold to the fatal fallacy that, although we acquired our Empire by force, we are entitled to maintain it by a general agreement between the nations of the world that anyone who questions our position shall be regarded as a criminal. Pacifists believe that we can come to some arrangement by which our frontiers shall be guaranteed in perpetuity. It is impossible; and a very dangerous delusion. Having vast possessions, we must be prepared to shed our blood in their defence. Our own blood. Unless we are prepared to do so, we shall go the way of others who have flinched from paying the price of Empire.

Far from being a policy of war, this constant and never-ceasing military preparedness which I advocate is an insurance for peace. It was the pacifists who brought us, step by step, beginning with the Peace Ballot of 1935, to the very brink of war. If we had not disarmed, we should not be in peril to-day.

One kind of pacifist is he—or often she—who is so afraid of any nation except ourselves becoming powerful that he—or she—wants us to fight them immediately, to prevent anyone but ourselves becoming big and strong. The others are not to be trusted. That is the policy of the geo-political romantics, who see everything in terms of strategical encirclement; and they are indistinguishable from the British and German Imperialists of 1914. Let us hope that the world has grown wiser since then.

Then there are other pacifists who will not see (even to-day) that unless we are prepared to fight we must become slaves. Preparation includes a martial spirit in causes which we believe just. What those causes are is a matter of opinion; but there is no way (except Mr. Gandhi's non-resistance) in which we can defend the right unless we are ready to die for it, and cause others to die—*i.e.*, to kill those who do not agree with us. A tedious truism, this, but one that should be repeated until it is remembered in modern England. War must not be undertaken lightly; but if it be undertaken at all, then armaments and alliances are useless without the human will behind them. Let us beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. The self-righteous attitude of those who refuse to bear arms themselves, but will allow others to risk their lives on their behalf, is simply nauseating.

Some pacifists, I freely admit, are genuine idealists (the Quakers, for instance), but it seems to me that the wide influence of the Peace Pledge Group (now opposing even the Voluntary Register), and the attitude of mind of the persons who answered the questionnaire of the Peace Ballot of 1935, reveal a shocking confusion in the public mind. A confusion that must be cleared before we can be true to ourselves and to our friends.

Only a few years ago—up to 1937 indeed—the “full

pacifist position" seemed to be making headway in England. Perhaps it still is, for it is ably advocated by Miss Rose Macaulay, Mr. Lansbury, Dr. Raven, Lord Ponsonby, Mr. Aldous Huxley, and other equally distinguished people, who have gathered to their cause a large following. John Bull is a lazy chap intellectually: he feels—or felt until recently—that these good people mean well, and that they deserve sympathy in their efforts to prevent war. The Peace Pledge Group began with a flying start. Few people bothered to argue with it.

In Dorchester, one of the cities which provides our army with some of its finest soldiers, Dick Sheppard and George Lansbury held a pacifist meeting in 1937. For months afterwards recruiting dropped away almost to nothing. Was it surprising that Dorset boys hesitated to enlist when a great preacher and a respected politician—uncontradicted by persons of equal weight—told them that it was not only foolish to fight for one's country, but wicked?

Dick Sheppard was a saint. In another age he would have founded an Order. Even to-day his witness to Christ remains a flame in the hearts of men, and I am proud to remember that we were friends. He did an immense amount of good in the world, but some of his ideas, like the ideas of other great men, were dynamite, and productive of evil. His pacifism, in so far as it took root, was poison in the mind of England.

Does it ever occur to the extreme pacifists that in the event of war they will imperil other lives besides their own? Do they ever reflect that their attitude is not only Pharisaical, but in absolute contradiction to the principles of democracy?

If the members of the Peace Pledge Group were an obscure sect of fanatics, we might let them stew in their own juice. But there are 100,000 of them, or more, and

they are led by some of the cleverest people in England. Either their views are outrageous nonsense or they are not. There is no middle position. Either we must alter our whole outlook on life and try to remodel the world, or else it is the duty of Christian men to bear arms upon certain occasions. The Prayer Book says that such is our duty.

We should meet these pacifist idealists—these blind guides that strain at a gnat and swallow a camel—on their own ground and confute them.

Personally, I have no doubt that the teaching of Christ supports my view. When He healed the servant of the Centurion (Matt. viii. and Luke vii.) He praised the latter for his faith. There was no word of disapproval of the profession of a soldier, yet we know that He was not sparing of His condemnation of other officials. He tells us that He came not to send peace on earth, but a sword. He speaks of the strife of kings in a parable, and recommends His disciples to sell their shirts (Luke xxii. 36) in order to obtain weapons. It is true that after Peter had struck off the ear of the servant of the High Priest He told His disciple that "all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword" (Matt. xxvi. 52). But these words related obviously to the particular circumstances of the moment, as also did His counsel to "turn the other cheek." Here, in the hours before His crucifixion, He had expressly commanded His disciples to arm themselves; we do not know the reason, but we may infer that He desired their safety. Himself He would not save, and He healed the hurt of Malchus by His touch; but it is clear from what has gone before that there were circumstances in which He would have fought. He would have fought to save others, had the Jews assaulted His disciples and not Himself. And in the Temple, with His whip of small cords, overturning the tables of the money-

changers and the traffickers in doves, he was certainly not a pacifist.

Extreme pacifists repudiate violence in all circumstances, in direct contradiction, as far as I can see, to Christ's teaching. They preach a fallacy which crops up again and again through history, whenever the Devil creeps into the councils of the intellectuals. But if we are too sluggish to answer and uproot these satanic ideas, they will one day spread through our English garden and choke our finest flowers.

In the Peace Ballot pacifists of a cooler but perhaps more dangerous kind attempted to make the British public say that it would fight for the League of Nations.

"For the first time in history," we are told,* "the British people had the opportunity of making themselves heard on a first-class issue above party politics. Lord Cecil had the necessary courage and vision to take the initiative. He was confident that the League had the strong support of an overwhelming majority of the British people. The weathercock of articulate opinion whirled in the winds of contrary propagandas, and the still, small voice of John Smith and Mary Brown remained inaudible. . . . If our democracy is a true democracy, John Smith and Mary Brown, and the sum of their opinions, are the things that matter. They are the rock upon which the fabric of our Government is based. Upon their response all advance ultimately depends."

The questions asked of John Smith and Mary Brown, and their answers, were as follows:

1. *Should Great Britain remain a member of the League of Nations?*

"Yes" votes, 11,090,387. "No" votes, 355,883. Abstentions and doubtful answers, 112,895.

* *The Peace Ballot: the Official History*, by Dame Adelaide Livingstone, in collaboration with Marjorie Scott Johnston. Gollancz, 1935.

2. *Are you in favour of an all-round reduction of armaments by international agreements?*

"Yes" votes, 10,470,489. "No" votes, 862,775. Abstentions and doubtful answers, 225,901.

3. *Are you in favour of an all-round abolition of national military and naval aircraft by international agreement?*

"Yes" votes, 9,533,558. "No" votes, 1,689,786. Abstentions and doubtful votes, 335,821.

4. *Should the manufacture and sale of armaments for private profit be prohibited by international agreement?*

"Yes" votes, 10,417,329. "No" votes, 775,415. Abstentions and doubtful answers, 366,421.

5. *Do you consider that if a nation insists on attacking another, the other nations should combine to compel it to stop by (a) economic and non-military measures, (b) if necessary, military measures?*

"Yes" votes for (a), 10,027,608. "No" votes, 635,074. Abstentions and doubtful answers, 896,483.

"Yes" votes for (b), 6,784,368. "No" votes, 2,351,981. Abstentions and doubtful answers, 2,422,816.

It is strange to remember, when we look into these figures, that they were considered at the time to be "an overwhelming vote in favour of the League of Nations." The reader can analyze the voting for himself and form his own opinion as to the value of a question such as, "Are you in favour of a reduction of armaments?" Indeed, it is astonishing that 1,088,676 votes should be *against* such a measure, or doubtful of its value.

But what are we to think of the vote on the only really controversial point on which John Smith and Mary Brown were asked their opinion—namely, whether they were prepared to fight for the League of Nations? Whether, in fact, they were prepared to carry out the

promises which the British Empire had already made, on their behalf, to support the League by military sanctions if necessary.

In 1935 there were 28,288,076 voters in the United Kingdom, of whom 22,001,837 voted in the General Election in that year. All must have heard of the Peace Ballot, which received enormous publicity; and all who wished to vote in it could have done so, for there was no necessity to go to a polling booth for the ballot; the papers were brought to one's door by enthusiastic volunteers. Under these circumstances 16,688,911 persons did not vote at all (amongst them I). If to this number be added the "Noes," the abstentions, and the doubtful answers of those who voted, there were 21,463,708 people against supporting the League by military sanctions to 6,784,368 in favour—that is, 66 per cent. majority against the League of Nations as at present constituted.

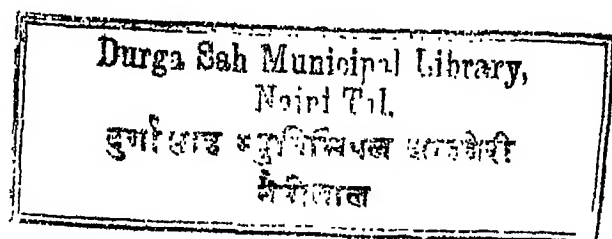
But even without counting the refusals the results show that only 58.6 per cent. of the 11,599,165 people who answered the questionnaire were in favour of military sanctions, and 41.4 per cent. against. How could any country embark on serious sanctions with at least four people out of ten (in reality about four people out of every five) against the policy of making such measures effective?

The Peace Ballot made a lot of noise and did incalculable harm, for it frightened the Government into an impossible position over Abyssinia. Lord Cecil was quite wrong, of course, in believing that he had "the strong support of an overwhelming majority of the British people"; but somehow or other the impression was created that he had.

Somehow, also, the impression has been created that we in England are more interested in the troubles of refugees from Eastern Europe than in our own unemployed; but

that also is not true. Much of what we print is not true, or at any rate not representative of the British people.

And are the opinions of 12,000,000 John Smiths and Mary Browns really and truly "the rock upon which the fabric of our Government is based"? I think not. What is important is that our decisions should be honest, and based on justice and Christianity. I do not think that the decision of 20,000,000 or 40,000,000 people on a complicated issue of foreign policy—such as how far can we support Poland—is a firm rock on which to base the existence of our Empire. Democracy, in my view, must be guided by its chosen leaders, who have, or ought to have, special knowledge. But these leaders are inevitably swayed by the Press, which makes public opinion, so that it is the newspapers, not the politicians, who are the real rulers of this country. This is a most unsatisfactory position. One would like to see Democracy much more carefully and scientifically defined than it has yet been—by Lord Baldwin, for instance, or by Professor Ernest Barker—before one can assent to the proposition that progress depends on John Smith and Mary Brown. The noble periods of orators and the panegyrics of professors who label as democracy all that is fair and of good report remind one of Tennyson's "Freedom free to slay herself, and dying whilst they shout her name."



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